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THE VARIORUM AND DEFINITIVE EDITION  
OF THE POETICAL AND PROSE WRITINGS OF  
EDWARD FITZGERALD





THE VARIORUM AND DEFINITIVE EDITION  
OF THE POETICAL AND PROSE WRITINGS OF  
**EDWARD FITZGERALD**

INCLUDING A COMPLETE BIBLIOGRAPHY AND  
INTERESTING PERSONAL AND LITERARY NOTES  
THE WHOLE COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY  
GEORGE BENTHAM  
AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
EDMUND GOSSE



VOLUME FIVE

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
EXTRACTS FROM FITZGERALD'S LETTERS RELAT- ING TO THE "TWO DRAMAS OF CALDERON."	ix
THE MIGHTY MAGICIAN . . . . .	1
"SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF" . .	95
POLONIUS . . . . .	197

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EXTRACTS FROM FITZGERALD'S LET-  
TERS RELATING TO THE "TWO  
DRAMAS OF CALDERON."

To E. B. Corwell.

[Merton Rectory], September 3, '58.

. . . . .  
I wish I could finish the 'Mighty Magician' in my new way: which I know you would like, in spite of your caveat for the Gracioso. I have not wholly dropt the two Students, but kept them quite under; and brought out the religious character of the Piece into stronger Relief. But as I have thrown much, if not into Lyric, into Rhyme, which strikes a more Lyric Chord, I have found it much harder to satisfy myself than with the good old Blank Verse, which I used to manage easily enough. The 'Vida es Sueño' again, though blank Verse, has been difficult to arrange; here also Clarin is not quenched, but subdued: as is all Rosaura's Story, so as to assist, and not compete with, the main Interest. I really wish I could finish these some lucky day: but, as I said, it is so much easier to leave them alone; and when I had done my best, I don't know if they are worth the pains, or whether any one (except you) would care for them even if they were worth caring for.

## EXTRACTS FROM FITZGERALD'S LETTERS

To E. B. Cowell.

Market Hill: Woodbridge.

Nov. 11, '64.

. . . I don't know if it's your coming home, or my being better this Winter, or what: but I have caught up a long ago begun *Version* of my dear old *Mágico*, and have so recast it that scarce a *Plank* remains of the original! Pretty impudence: and yet all done to conciliate English, or modern, Sympathy. This I shan't publish: so say (pray!) nothing of it at all—remember—only I shall print some Copies for you and one or two more: and you and Elizabeth will like it a great deal too much. There is really very great skill in the *Adaptation*, and *Remodeling* of it. By the bye, would you translate *Demonio*, *Lucifer* or *Satan*? One of the two I take. I cut out all of the *precioso* very ingeniously: and give all the *Mountain-moving*, etc., in the second Act without Stage direction, so as it may seem to pass only in the dazzled Eyes, or *Fantasy*, of Cyprian. All this is really a very difficult Job to me; not worth the Candle, I dare say: only that you two will be pleased. I also increase the religious Element in the Drama; and make Cyprian outwit the Devil more cleverly than he now does; for the Devil was certainly too clever to be caught in his own Art. That was very good Fun for an *Autodafé* Audience, however.

But please say nothing of this to any one. I should like to take up the *Vida es Sueño* too in the same manner;

RELATING TO THE "TWO DRAMAS OF CALDERON"

*but these plays are more difficult than all the others put together: and I have no spur now.*

*To R. C. Trench.*

*Market Hill: Woodbridge.*

*February 25, '65.*

. . . *And I took up three sketched out Dramas, two of Calderon, and have licked the two Calderons into some sort of shape of my own, without referring to the Original. One of them goes by this Post to your Grace; and when I tell you the other is no other than your own "Life's a Dream," you won't wonder at my sending the present one on Trial, both done as they are in the same lawless, perhaps impudent, way. I know you would not care who did these things, so long as they were well done; but one does n't wish to meddle, and in so free-and-easy a way, with a Great Man's Masterpieces, and utterly fail: especially when two much better men have been before one. One excuse is, that Shelley and Dr. Trench only took parts of these plays, not caring surely—who can?—for the underplot and buffoonery which stands most in the way of the tragic Dramas. Yet I think it is as a whole, that is, the whole main Story, that these Plays are capital; and therefore I have tried to present that whole, leaving out the rest, or nearly so; and altogether the Thing has become so altered one way or another that I am afraid of it now it's done, and only send you one Play (the other indeed is not done printing:*

## EXTRACTS FROM FITZGERALD'S LETTERS

*neither to be published), which will be enough if it is an absurd Attempt. For the Vida is not so good even, I doubt: dealing more in the Heroics, &c.*

*I tell Donne he is too partial a Friend; so is Cowell: Spedding, I think, would n't care. So, as you were very kind about the other Plays, and love Calderon (which I doubt argues against me), I send you my Magician.*

*To W. E. Crowfoot.*

*Market Hill, Woodbridge.*

*April 3 [1865].*

*I believe I shall send you in some few days the last Print I shall ever dabble in: taken, though not translated, from two of Calderon's most famous ones; the Story and Moral of which will interest you a little, and may interest some others also. Edward Cowell's return from India set me on finishing what I had left and put away these nine years; but I print, not to publish, but because I think they will interest a few people. . . .*

*To C. E. Norton.*

*Little Grange, Woodbridge, Suffolk.*

*(Post Mark Dec. 8.) Dec. 9, '75.*

*P. S. I am doing an odd thing in bethinking me of sending you two Calderon Plays, which my friend Mrs. Kemble has spoken of also in your Country. So you might one day hear of them: and if you liked what came*



## RELATING TO THE "TWO DRAMAS OF CALDERON"

*before, wish to see them. So here they are, for better or worse; and at any rate, one Note of Thanks (which I doubt you will feel bound to write) will do for both, and you can read as little as you please of either. All these things have been done partly as an amusement in a lonely life: partly to give some sort of idea of the originals to friends who knew them not: and printed, because (like many others, I suppose) I can only dress my best when seeing myself in Type, in the same way as I can scarce read others unless in such a form. I suppose there was some Vanity in it all: but really, if I had that strong, I might have done (considering what little I can do) like Crabbe's Bachelor—*

*‘ I might have made a Book, but that my Pride  
In the not making was more gratified.’<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> *Tales of the Hall. Book X. (vol. VI. p. 246).*



THE MIGHTY MAGICIAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AURELIO, *Viceroy of Antioch.*

LELIO, *his Son.*

FABIO, *a chief Officer in Antioch.*

FLORO, *his Son.*

LISANDRO, *an aged Christian.*

JUSTINA, *his Daughter.*

LIVIA, *their servant.*

CIPRIANO, *a Professor of Learning.*

EUSEBIO, }  
JULIAN, } *his Scholars.*

LUCIFER, *the Evil Spirit.*

CITIZENS, SOLDIERS, &c.



## THE MIGHTY MAGICIAN.

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### ACT I.

SCENE I. *A retired Grove near Antioch.—Enter CIPRIANO, EUSEBIO, and JULIAN, with books.*

*Cipr.* THIS is the place, this the sequester'd spot  
Where, in the flower about and leaf above,  
I find the shade and quiet that I love,  
And oft resort to rest a wearied wing;  
And here, good lads, leave me alone, but not  
Lonely, companion'd with the books you bring:  
That while the city from all open doors  
Abroad her gaping population pours,  
To swell the triumph of the pomp divine  
That with procession, sacrifice, and song  
Convoys her tutelary Zeus along  
For installation in his splendid shrine;  
I, flying from the hubbub of the throng  
That overflows her thoroughfares and streets,  
And here but faintly touches and retreats,  
In solitary meditation may  
Discount at ease my summer holiday.

You to the city back, and take your fill  
Of festival, and all that with the time's,  
And your own youth's, triumphant temper chimes;  
Leaving me here alone to mine; until  
Yon golden idol reaching overhead,  
Dragg'd from his height, and bleeding out his fires  
Along the threshold of the west, expires,  
And drops into the sea's sepulchral lead.

(4) *Eusebio.* Nay, sir, think once again, and go with us,  
Or, if you will, without us; only, go;  
Lest Antioch herself as well as we  
Cry out upon a maim'd solemnity.

*Julian.* Oh, how I wish I had not brought the books,  
Which you have ever at command—indeed,  
Without them, all within them carry—here—  
Garner'd—aloft—

*Euseb.* In truth, if stay you will,  
I scarcely care to go myself.

*Cipr.* Nay, nay,  
Good lads, good boys, all thanks, and all the more,  
If you but leave it simply as I say.  
You have been somewhat overtaxed of late,  
And want some holiday.

*Julian.* Well, sir, and you?

*Cipr.* Oh, I am of that tougher age and stuff  
Whose relaxation is its work. Besides,

Think you the poor Professor needs no time  
For solitary tillage of his brains  
Before such shrewd ingatherers as you  
Come on him for their harvest unawares?  
Away, away! and like good citizens  
Help swell the general joy with two such faces  
As such as mine would only help to cloud.

*Euseb.* Nay, sir—

*Cipr.* But I say, Yea, sir! and my scholars  
By yea and nay as I would have them do.

*Euseb.* Well, then, farewell, sir.

*Cipr.* Farewell, both of you.

[*Exeunt* EUSEBIO and JULIAN.

Away with them, light heart and wingéd heel,  
Soon leaving drowsy Pallas and her dull  
Professor out of sight, and out of mind.  
And yet not so perhaps; and, were it so,  
Why, better with the frolic herd forgetting  
All in the youth and sunshine of the day  
Than ruminating in the shade apart.  
Well, each his way and humour; some to lie  
Like Nature's sickly children in her lap,  
While all the stronger brethren are at play;  
When ev'n the mighty Mother's self would seem  
Drest out in all her festival attire  
In honour of the universal Sire

(5)

Whom Antioch as for her own to-day  
Propitiates. Hark, the music!—Speed, good lads,  
Or you will be too late. Ah, needless caution!  
Ev'n now already half way down the hill,  
Spurr'd by the very blood within their veins,  
They catch up others, who catching from them  
The fire they re-inflame, the flying troop  
Consuming fast to distance in a cloud  
Of dust themselves have kindled, whirls away  
Where the shrill music blown above the walls  
Tells of the solemn work begun within.  
Why, ev'n the shrieking pipe that pierces here,  
Shows me enough of all the long procession  
Of white-robed priest and chanting chorister,  
The milkwhite victim crown'd, and high aloft  
The chariot of the nodding deity,  
Whose brazen eyes that as their sockets see,  
Stare at his loyal votaries. Ah me!—  
Well, here too happier, if not wiser, those  
Who, with the heart of unsuspecting youth,  
Take up tradition from their fathers' hands  
To pass it on to others in their turn;  
But leaving me behind them in the race  
With less indeed than little appetite  
For ceremonies, and to gods, like these,  
That, let the rabble shout for as they please,

Another sort begin to shake their heads at,  
And heav'n to rumble with uneasily  
As flinging out some antiquated gear.  
So wide, since subtle Greece the pebble flung  
Into the sleeping pool of superstition,  
Its undulation spreads to other shores,  
And saps at the foundation of our schools.  
—Why, this last Roman, Caius Plinius—  
Who drawing nature's growth and history  
Down to her root and first cause—What says he?—  
Ev'n at the very threshold of his book  
A definition laying over which  
The clumsy mimic idols of our shrines  
Stumble and break to pieces—oh, here it is—  
“ *Quapropter effigiem Dei formamque quærere,  
Imbecillitatis humanæ reor* ”—  
“ All visible effigies of God  
But types of human imbecility.”—  
But what has Antioch to say to that,  
Who at such cost of marble and of gold  
Has built the very temple into which  
She drags her tutelary Zeus to-day?—  
Zeus veritable God, this effigy  
Is none of him at all! But then, alas!  
This same *Quapropter* follows a premiss  
That elbows out Zeus with his effigy.

(6)

For—as I gather from his foreign word—  
 Wherever, or Whatever, Deity—  
*Si modo est alius*—if distinct at all  
 From universal Nature—it must be  
 One all-informing, individual Whole,  
 All eye, all ear, all self, all sense, all soul—  
 Whereas this Zeus of ours, though Chief indeed—  
 Nay, *because* chief of other gods than he,  
 Comes from this Roman's hand no God at all!—  
 This is a knotty question.

*Lucifer (without).* Nor while I  
 Tangle, for you, good doctor, to untie.

*Cipr.* What! The poor bird scarce settled on the  
 bough,  
 Before the fowler after him! How now?  
 Who 's there?

*Lucifer (entering habited as a Merchant).* A stran-  
 ger; therefore pardon him,  
 Who somehow parted from his company  
 And lost in his own thoughts (a company  
 You know one cannot lose so easily)  
 Has lost his way to Antioch.

(7) *Cipr.* Antioch!

Whose high white towers and temples ev'n from here  
 Challenge the sight, and scarce a random line  
 Traced by a wandering foot along the grass





To use it at your pleasure.

*Luc.* Still with yours—

Whom by your sober suit and composed looks,

And by this still society of books,

I take to be a scholar—

*Cipr.* And if so?

*Luc.* Ill brooking idle company.

*Cipr.* Perhaps;

But that no wiser traveller need be—

(8) And, if I judge of you as you of me,

Though with no book hung out for sign before,

Perchance a scholar too.

*Luc.* If so, more read

In men than books, as travellers are wont.

But, if myself but little of a bookman,

Addicted much to scholars' company,

Of whom I meet with many on my travels,

And who, you know, themselves are living books.

*Cipr.* And you have travell'd much?

*Luc.* Aye, little else,

One may say, since I came into the world

Than going up and down it: visiting

As many men and cities as Ulysses,

From first his leaving Troy without her crown,

Along the charméd coasts he pass'd, with all

The Polyphemes and Circes in the way,



Right to the Pillars where his ship went down.  
Nay, and yet farther, where the dark Phœnician  
Digs the pale metal which the sun scarce deigns  
With a slant glance to ripen in earth's veins:  
Or back again so close beneath his own  
Proper dominion, that the very mould  
Beneath he kindles into proper gold,  
And strikes a living Iris into stone.

*Cipr.* One place, however, where Ulysses was,  
I think you have not been to—where he saw  
Those he left dead upon the field of Troy  
Come one by one to lap the bowl of blood  
Set for them in the fields of Asphodel.

*Luc.* Humph!—as to that, a voyage which if all  
Must take, less need to brag of; or perchance  
Ulysses, or his poet, apt to err  
About the people and their doings there—  
But let the wonders in the world below  
Be what they may; enough in that above  
For any sober curiosity,  
Without one's diving down before one's time:  
Not only countries now as long ago  
Known, till'd, inhabited, and civilized;  
As Egypt, Greece, and Rome, with all their arts,  
Trades, customs, politics, and history:  
But deep in yet scarce navigated seas,

Countries uncouth, with their peculiar growths  
Of vegetation or of life; where men  
Are savage as the soil they never till;  
Or never were, or were so long ago,  
Their very story blotted from the page  
Of earth they wrote it on; unless perchance  
From riot-running nature's overgrowth  
Of swarming vegetation, peeps some scarce  
Decypherable monument which yet,  
To those who find the key, perchance has told  
Stories of men, more mighty men, of old,  
Or of the gods themselves who walk'd the world  
When with the dews of first creation wet.

*Cipr.* Oh knowledge from the fountain freshly drawn  
Without the tedious go-between of books!  
But with fresh soul and senses unimpair'd  
What from the pale reflection of report  
We catch at second hand, and much beside  
That in our solitary cells we miss.

*Luc.* Aye, truly we that travel see strange things,  
Though said to tell of stranger; some of us,  
Deceived ourselves, or seeking to deceive,  
With prodigies and monsters which the world,  
As wide and full of wonders as it is,  
Never yet saw, I think, nor ever will:  
Which yet your scholars use for clay and straw

Of which to build your mighty folios—  
For instance this same bulky Roman here,  
Whose leaf you turn'd, I doubt impatiently,  
When my intrusion rustled in the leaves—

*Cipr.* Hah! But how knew you—

*Luc.* Nay, if some stray words  
Of old familiar Latin met my ear  
As I stood hesitating.

*Cipr. (holding up the book).* This at least  
You read then? (10)

*Luc.* One might say before 't was written.

*Cipr.* But how so?

*Luc.* Oh, this same sufficient Roman,  
What is he but another of the many  
Who having seen a little and heard more  
That others pick'd as loosely up before,  
Constructs his little bird's-nest universe  
Of shreds and particles of false and true  
Cemented with some thin philosophy,  
All filch'd from others, as from him to be  
By the next pilfering philosopher,  
Till blown away before the rising wind  
Of true discovery, or dropt to nothing  
After succeeding seasons of neglect.

*Cipr. (aside).* A strange man this—sharp wit and  
biting word.

(*Aloud*) Yet surely Man, after so many ages  
Of patient observation of the world  
He lives in, is entitled by the wit  
Vouchsafed him by the Maker of the world  
To draw into some comprehensive whole  
The stray particulars.

*Luc.*                                 Aye, and forsooth,  
Not only the material world he lives in;  
But, having of this undigested heap  
Composed a World, must make its Maker too,  
Of abstract attributes, of each of which  
Still more unsure than of the palpable,  
Forthwith he draws to some consistent One  
The accumulated ignorance of each  
In so compact a plausibility  
As light to carry as it was to build.

*Cipr.* But, since (I know not how) you hit upon  
The question I was trying when you came;  
And, spite of your disclaiming scholarship,  
Seem versed in that which occupies the best—  
If Pliny blunder with his single God,  
As in our twilight reason well he may,  
(11) Confess however that a Deity  
Plural and self-discordant, as he says,  
Is yet more like frail man's imagination,  
Who, for his own necessities and lusts,

Splits up and mangles the Divine idea  
To pieces, as he wants a piece of each;  
Not only gods for all the elements  
Divided into land, and sea, and sky;  
But gods of health, wealth, love, and fortune; nay,  
Of war and murder, rape and robbery;  
Men of their own worse nature making gods  
To serve the very vices that suggest them,  
Which yet upon their fellow-men they visit  
(Else were an end of human polity)  
With chain and fine and banishment and death.  
So that unless man made such gods as these,  
Then are these gods worse than the man they made.  
And for the attributes, which though indeed  
You gibe at us for canvassing, yourself  
Must grant—as whether one or manifold,  
Deity in its simplest definition  
Must be at least eternal—

*Luc.*

Well?—

*Cipr.*

Yet those

Who stuff Olympus are so little that,  
That Zeus himself, the sovereign of all,  
Barely escaped devouring at his birth  
By his own father, who anticipated  
And found some such hard measure for himself;  
And as for Zeus' own progeny—some born



Of so much baser matter than his brain,  
As from his eggs, which the almighty swan  
Impregnated, and mortal Leda laid;  
And whose two chicken-deities once hatch'd  
Now live and die on each alternate day.

*Luc.* Aye, but if much of this be allegory  
In which the wisdom of antiquity  
Veils the pure Deity from eyes profane—

*Cipr.* —Deity taking arms against itself  
(12) Under Troy walls, wounding and wounded—aye  
And, trailing heavenly ichor from their wounds,  
So help'd by others from the field to one  
Who knew the leech's art themselves did not.

*Luc.* Softly—if not to swear to allegory,  
Still less to all the poets sing of heaven,  
High up Parnassus as they think to sit.

*Cipr.* But these same poets, therefore sacred call'd,  
They are who these same allegories spin  
Which time and fond tradition consecrate;  
What might have been of the divine within  
So overgrown with folly and with sin  
As but a spark of God would such impure  
Assimilation with himself abjure,  
Which yet with all the nostril that he may  
Zeus snuff's from Antioch's sacrifice to-day.  
Besides, beyond the reach of allegory

The gods themselves in their own oracles  
Doubly themselves convict—  
As when they urge two nations on to war,  
By promising the victory to each;  
Whereby on one side their omniscience  
Suffers, as their all-goodness on the other.

*Luc.* What if such seeming contradictions aim  
Where human understanding cannot reach?  
But granting for the sake of argument,  
And for that only, what you now premise;  
What follows?

*Cipr.* Why, that if, as Pliny writes,  
Deity by its very definition  
Be one, eternal, absolute, all wise,  
All good, omnipotent, all ear, all eyes,  
Incapable of disintegration—  
If this be Deity indeed—

*Luc.* Then what?

*Cipr.* Simply—that we in Antioch know him not.

*Luc.* Rash leap to necessary non-conclusion  
From a premiss that quarrels with itself  
More than the deity it would impugn;  
For if one God eternal and all wise,  
Omnipotent to do as to devise,  
Whence this disorder and discordance in—  
Not only this material universe,

(13)

That seems created only to be rack'd  
By the rebellion of its elements,  
In earthquake and tempestuous anarchy—  
But also in the human microcosm  
You say created to reflect it all?  
For Deity, all goodness as all wise,  
Why create man the thing of lust and lies  
You say reflects himself in his false god?—  
By modern oracle no more convicted  
Of falsehood, than by that first oracle  
Which first creation settled in man's heart.  
No, if you must define, premise, conclude,  
Away with all the coward squeamishness  
That dares not face the universe it questions;  
Blinking the evil and antagonism  
Into its very constitution breathed  
By him who, but himself to quarrel with,  
Quarrels as might the many with each other.  
Or would you be yourself one with yourself,  
Catch hold of such as Epicurus' skirt,  
Who, desperately confounded this confusion  
Of matter, spirit, good and evil, yea,  
Godhead itself, into a universe  
That is created, roll'd along, and ruled,  
By no more wise direction than blind Chance.  
Trouble yourself no more with disquisition



That by sad, slow, and unprogressive steps  
Of wasted soul and body lead to nothing:  
And only sure of life's short breathing-while,  
And knowing that the gods who threaten us  
With after-vengeance of the very crimes  
They revel in themselves, are nothing more  
Than the mere coinage of our proper brain  
To cheat us of our scanty pleasure here  
With terror of a harsh account hereafter;—  
Eat, drink, be merry; crown yourselves with flowers (14)  
About as lasting as the heads they garland;  
And snatching what you can of life's poor feast,  
When summon'd to depart, with no ill grace,  
Like a too greedy guest, cling to the table  
Whither the generations that succeed  
Press forward famish'd for their turn to feed.  
Nay, or before your time self-surfeited,  
Wait not for nature's signal to be gone,  
But with the potion of the spotted weed,  
That peradventure wild beside your door  
For some such friendly purpose cheaply grows,  
Anticipate too tardy nature's call:  
Ev'n as one last great Roman of them all  
Dismiss'd himself betimes into the sum  
Of universe; not nothing to become;  
For that can never cease that was before;

But not that sad Lucretius any more.

*Cipr.* Oh, were it not that sometimes through the dark  
That walls us about, a random ray  
Breaks in to tell one of a better day  
Beyond—

*Enter LELIO and FLORO, as about to fight.*

*Lelio.* Enough—these branches that exclude the sun  
Defy all other inquisition.  
No need of further way.

*Floro.* Nor further word;  
Draw, sir, at once—

*Lelio.* Nay, parry that yourself  
Which waited not your summons to be drawn.

*Cipr.* Lelio, and Floro?

*Floro.* What, will the leaves blab?

*Lelio.* And with their arms arrest a just revenge?

*Cipr.* And well indeed may trees begin to talk,  
When men as you go babbling.

*Floro.* Whoso speaks  
And loves his life, hold back.

*Lelio.* I know the voice,  
(15) But dazzled with the darkness—Cipriano!

*Cipr.* Aye; Cipriano, sure enough; as you  
Lelio and Floro.

*Floro.* Well, let that suffice,

And leave us as you find us.

*Cipr.*

No, not yet—

*Floro.* Not yet!

*Lelio.*

Good Cipriano—

*Cipr.*

Till I know

How it has come to pass that two such friends,  
Each of the noblest blood in Antioch,  
Are here to shed it by each other's hands.

*Lelio.* Sudden surprise, and old respect for you,  
Suspend my sword a moment, Cipriano,  
That else—

*Floro.* Stand back, stand back! You are a scholar,  
And better versed in logic than the laws  
Of honour; and perhaps have yet to learn  
That when two noblemen have drawn the sword,  
One only must return it to the sheath.

*Lelio.* 'T is so indeed—once more, stand off.

*Cipr.*

And once more

Back, both of you, say I; if of your lives  
Regardless, not of mine, which thus, unarm'd,  
I fling between your swords—  
Lelio, I look to you—Floro, as ever  
Somewhat hot-headed and thrasonical—  
Or do you hold with him the scholar's gown  
Has smother'd all the native soldiery  
That saucy so-call'd honour to itself

Alone mis-arrogates! You are deceived:  
I am like you by birth a gentleman,  
Under like obligation to the laws  
Of that true honour, which my books indeed  
May help distinguish from its counterfeit,  
But, older as I am, have yet not chill'd  
From catching fire at any just affront—  
And let me tell you this too—those same books,  
Ancient and modern, tell of many a hand  
That, turning most assiduously the leaf,  
When the time came, could wield as well the sword.  
I am unarm'd: but you, with all your swords,  
I say you shall not turn them on each other  
(16) Till you have told me what the quarrel is;  
Which after hearing if I own for one  
That honour may not settle with good word,  
I pledge my own to leave it to the sword.  
Now, Lelio?—

*Lelio.*                      One answer does for both:  
He loves where I love.

*Floro.*                      No—I thus much more—  
He dares to love where I had loved before;  
Betrayéd friendship adding to the score  
Of upstart love.

*Lelio.*                      You hear him, Cipriano?  
And after such a challenge—

*Cipr.* Yet a moment.

As there are kinds of honour, so of love—  
And ladies—

*Lelio.* Cipriano, Cipriano!

One friend my foe for daring love where I,  
Let not another, daring doubt that he  
Honours himself in so dishonouring me—

*Floro.* Slanting your sharp divisions on a jewel  
That if the sun turn'd all his beams upon  
He could not find, or make, a flaw—

*Cipr.* Nor I then,  
With far less searching scrutiny than Phœbus—  
I am to understand then, such a fair  
Jewel as either would in wedlock wear.

*Floro.* And rather die than let another dare.

*Cipr.* Enough, enough! of Lelio's strange logic,  
And Floro's more intelligible rant,  
And back to sober metaphor. Which of you  
Has this fair jewel turn'd her light upon?

*Floro (after a pause).* Why, who would boast—

*Lelio.* Indeed, how could she be  
The very pearl of chastity she is,  
Turn'd she her glances either left or right? (17)

*Cipr.* Which therefore each, as he obliquely steals,  
Counts on as given him only—

*Floro.* To have done

With metaphor and logic, what you will,  
So as we fall to work;  
Or if you must have reason, this, I say,  
Resolves itself to a short syllogism—  
Whether she give or we presume upon—  
If one of us devote himself to win her,  
How dares another cross him?

*Cipr.* But if she  
Not only turn to neither, but still worse,  
Or better, turn from both?

*Lelio.* But love by long devotion may be won,  
That only one should offer—

*Floro.* And that one  
Who first—

*Lelio.* Who first!—

*Cipr.* And all this while, forsooth,  
The lady, of whose purity one test  
Is her unblemisht unpublicity,  
Is made a target for the common tongue  
Of Antioch to shoot reproaches at  
For stirring up two noblemen to blood.  
From which she only can escape, forsooth,  
By choosing one of two she cares not for  
At once; or else, to mend the matter, when  
He comes to claim her by the other's blood.

*Lelio.* At least she will not hate him, live or dead,



Who staked his life upon her love.

*Cipr.*

Small good

To him who lost the stake; and he that won—

Will she begin to love whom not before

For laying unloved blood upon her door;

Or, if she ever loved at all, love more?

Is this fair logic, or of one who knows

No more of woman's honour than of man's?

Come, come, no more of beating round the bush,

You know how I have known and loved you both,

(18)

As brothers—say as sons—upon the score

Of some few years and some few books read more—

Though two such fiery fine young gentlemen,

Put up your swords and be good boys again,

Deferring to your ancient pedagogue;

If cold by time and studies, as you say,

Then fitter for a go-between in love,

And warm at least in loyalty to you.

These jewels—to take up the metaphor

Until you choose to drop it of yourselves—

These jewels have their caskets, I suppose—

Kindred and circumstance, I mean—

*Lelio.*

Oh such

As by their honourable poverty

Do more than doubly set the jewel off!

*Cipr.* Ev'n so? And may not one, who, you agree,

Proof-cold against suspicion of the kind,  
Be so far trusted, as, if not to see,  
To hear, at least, of where, and how, enshrined?

*Floro.* I know not what to answer. How say you?

*Lelio.* Relying on your honour and tried love—  
Justina, daughter of the old Lisandro.

*Cipr.* I know them; her if scarcely, yet how far  
Your praises short of her perfections are;  
Him better, by some little service done  
That rid him of a greater difficulty,  
And would again unlock his door to me—  
—And who knows also, if you both agree,  
Her now closed lips; if but a sigh between  
May tell which way the maiden heart may lean?

*Floro.* Again, what say you, Lelio?

*Lelio.* I, for one,  
Content with that decision.

*Floro.* Be it so.

*Cipr.* Why, after all, behold how luckily  
You stumbled on this rock in honour's road,  
That serves instead for Cupid's stepping-stone.  
And when the knightly courage of you both  
(19) Was all at fault to hammer out the way,  
Who knows but some duenna-doctor may?  
And will—if but like reasonable men,  
Not angry boys, you promise to keep sheath'd



Your swords, while from her father or herself  
I gather, from a single sigh perhaps,  
To which, if either, unaware she turns;  
Provided, if to one, the other yield;  
But if to neither, both shall quit the field.  
What say you both to this?

*Lelio.* Aye—I for one.

*Floro.* And I; provided on the instant done.

*Cipr.* No better time than now, when, as I think,  
The city, with her solemn uproar busy,  
Shuts her we have to do with close within.  
But you must come along with me, for fear  
Your hands go feeling for your swords again  
If left together: and besides to know  
The verdict soon as spoken.

*Lelio.* Let us go. [*Exeunt.*

*Lucifer (re-appearing).* Aye, Cipriano, faster than  
you think;

For I will lend you wings to burn yourself  
In the same taper they are singed withal.—  
By the quick feelers of iniquity  
That from hell's mouth reach through this lower world,  
And tremble to the lightest touch of mischief,  
Warn'd of an active spirit hereabout  
Of the true God inquisitive, and restless  
Under the false by which I rule the world,

Here am I come to test it for myself.  
And lo! two fools have put into my hand  
The snare that, wanting most, I might have miss'd;  
That shall not him alone en-mesh, but *her*  
Whom I have long and vainly from the ranks  
Striv'n to seduce of Him, the woman-born,  
Who is one day to bruise the serpent's head—  
So is it written; but meanwhile my hour  
On earth is not accomplisht, and I fain  
(20) Of this detested race would hinder all  
From joining in the triumph of my fall  
Whom I may hinder; and of these, these twain;  
Each other by each other snaring; yea,  
Either at once the other's snare and prey.  
Oh, my good doctor, you must doubt, you must,  
And take no more the good old gods on trust;  
To Antioch then away; but not so fast  
But I shall be before you, starting last. [Exit.

SCENE II. *A Room in LISANDRO'S house.—Enter*  
*LISANDRO, JUSTINA, and LIVIA.*

*Justina.* At length the day draws in.

*Lisandro.* And in with it  
The impious acclamation that all day,  
Block up our doors and windows as we may,  
Insults our faith, and doubly threatens it.

Is all made fast, Justina?

*Just.* All shall be, sir,

When I have seen you safely to your rest.

*Lis.* You know how edict after edict aim'd  
By Rome against the little band of Christ—  
And at a time like this, the people drunk  
With idol-ecstasy—

*Just.* Alas, alas!

*Lis.* Oh, gladly would I scatter these last drops  
That now so scarcely creep along my veins,  
And these thin locks that tremble o'er the grave,  
In such a martyrdom as swept to heav'n  
The holy Paul who planted, and all those  
Who water'd here the true and only faith,  
Were't not for thee, for fear of thee, Justina,  
Drawing you down at once into my doom,  
Or leaving you behind, alone, to hide  
From insult and suspicion worse than death—  
I dare not think of it. Make fast; keep close;  
And then, God's will be done! You know we lie  
Under a double danger.

*Just.* How so, sir?

*Lis.* Aurelio and Fabio, both, you know, (21)  
So potent in the city, and but now  
Arm'd with a freshly whetted sword of vengeance  
Against the faith, but double-edged on us,

Should they but know, as know they must, their sons  
Haunting the doors of this suspected house.

*Just.* Alas, alas!

That I should draw this danger on your head!  
Which yet you know—

*Lis.* I know, I know—God knows,  
My darling daughter; but that chaste reserve  
Serves but to quicken beauty with a charm  
They find not in the wanton Venus here:  
Drawn as they are by those withdrawing eyes  
Irradiate from a mother's, into whose  
The very eyes of the Redeemer look'd,  
And whom I dare not haste to join in heav'n  
At cost of leaving thee defenceless here.

*Just.* Sufficient for the day! And now the day  
Is done. Come to your chamber—lean on me—  
Livia and I will see that all is fast;  
And, that all seen to, ere we sleep ourselves,  
Come to your bedside for your blessing. Hark!  
Knocking ev'n now! See to it, Livia.

*(She leads out LISANDRO, and returns.)*

Oh, well I got my father to his chamber!  
What is it?—

*Livia.* One would see your father, madam.

*Just.* At such an hour! He cannot, Livia;  
You know the poor old man is gone to rest—

Tell him—

*Livia.* If not your father, then yourself,  
On matter that he says concerns you both.

*Just.* Me too!—Oh, surely neither of the twain  
We both so dread?

*Livia.* No, madam; rather one  
I think that neither need have cause to fear,—  
Cipriano.

*Just.* Cipriano! The great scholar,  
Who did my father service, as I think, (22)  
And now may mean another; and God knows  
How much, or quickly, needed!

*Livia.* So he says.

*Just.* What shall I do! Will not to-morrow—

*Cipriano (entering).* Oh, lady,  
You scarce can wonder more than I myself  
At such a visit, and at such an hour,  
Only let what I come to say excuse  
The coming, and so much unmannerly.

*Just.* My father is withdrawn, sir, for the night,  
Never more wanting rest; I dare not rouse him,  
And least of all with any troubled news.  
Will not to-morrow—

*Cipr.* What I have to say  
Best told to-night, at once; and not the less  
Since you alone, whom chiefly it concerns,

Are here to listen.

*Just.* I!—Well, sir, relying  
On your grave reputation as a scholar,  
And on your foregone favour to my father,  
If I should dare to listen—

*Cipr.* And alone?

*Just.* Livia, leave us. [*Exit* LIVIA.]

*Cipr.* Oh, lady—oh, Justina—  
(Thus stammers the ambassador of love  
In presence of its sovereign)—  
You must—cannot but—know how many eyes  
Those eyes have wounded—

*Just.* Nay, sir—

*Cipr.* Nay, but hear.

I do not come for idle compliment,  
Nor on my own behalf; but in a cause  
On which hang life and death as well as love.  
Two of the noblest youths in Antioch,  
Lelio and Floro—Nay, but hear me out:  
Mine, and till now almost from birth each other's  
Inseparable friends, now deadly foes  
For love of you—

(23) *Just.* Oh, sir!

*Cipr.* I have but now  
Parted their swords in mortal quarrel cross'd.

*Just.* Oh, that was well.



*Cipr.* I think, for several sakes—  
Their own, their fathers', even Antioch's  
That would not lose one of so choice a pair;  
And, I am sure you think so, lady, yours,  
So less than covetous of public talk,  
And least of all at such a fearful cost.

*Just.* Oh, for all sakes all thanks!

*Cipr.* Yet little due  
For what so lightly done, and it may be  
So insufficiently; this feud not stopt—  
Suspended only, on a single word—  
Which now at this unseasonable hour  
I stand awaiting from the only lips  
That can allay the quarrel they have raised.

*Just.* Alas, why force an answer from my lips  
So long implied in silent disregard?

*Cipr.* Yet, without which, like two fierce dogs, but  
more  
Exasperated by the holding back,  
They will look for it in each other's blood.

*Just.* And think, poor men, to find their answer there!  
Oh, sir, you are the friend, the friend of both,  
A famous scholar; with authority  
And eloquence to press your friendship home.  
Surely in words such as you have at will  
You can persuade them for all sakes—and yet

No matter mine perhaps—but, as you say,  
Their fathers', Antioch's, their own—

*Cipr.*

Alas!

I doubt you know not in your maiden calm  
How fast all love and logic such as that  
Burns stubble up before a flame like this!

*Just. (aside).* And none in heav'n to help them!

*Cipr.*

All I can

But one condition hardly wringing out  
Of peace, till my impartial embassy

(24) Have ask'd on their behalf, which of the twain—  
How shall I least offend?—you least disdain?

*Just.* Disdain is not the word, sir; oh, no, no!  
I know and honour both as noblemen  
Of blood and station far above my own;  
And of so suitable accomplishments.  
Oh, there are many twice as fair as I,  
And of their own conditions, who, with half  
My wooing, long ere this had worn the wreath  
Tied with a father's blessing, and all Antioch  
To follow them with Hymeneal home.

*Cipr.* But if these fiery men, do what one will,  
Will look no way but this?—

*Just.*

Oh, but they will;

Divert their eyes awhile, a little while,  
Their hearts will follow; such a sudden passion



Can but have struck a shallow root—perhaps  
Ere this had perish'd, had not rival pride  
Between them blown it to this foolish height.

*Cipr.* Disdain is not the word then. Well, to seek,  
What still as wide as ever from assent—  
Could you but find it in your heart to feel  
If but a hair's-breadth less—say dis-esteem  
For one than for the other—

*Just.* No, no, no!  
Even to save their lives I could not say  
What is not—cannot—nay, and if it could  
And I could say that was that is not—*can* not—  
How should that hair's-breadth less of hope to one  
Weigh with the other to desist his suit,  
Both furious as you tell me?

*Cipr.* And both are:  
But ev'n that single hair thrown in by you  
Will turn the scale that else the sword must do.

*Just.* But surely must it not suffice for both  
That they who drew the sword in groundless hope  
Sheathe it in sure despair? Despair! Good God!  
For a poor creature like myself, despair!  
That men with souls to which a word like that  
Lengthens to infinite significance,  
Should pin it on a wretched woman's sleeve!  
But as men talk—I mean, as far as I

Can make them, as they say, despair of that  
Of which, even for this world's happiness,  
Despair is better hope of better things—  
Will not my saying—and as solemnly  
As what one best may vouch for; that so far  
As any hope of my poor liking goes,  
Despair indeed they must—why should not this  
Allay their wrath, and let relapsing love  
In his own channel all the clearer run  
For this slight interjection in the current?  
Why should it not be so?

*Cipr.*

Alas, I know not:

For though as much they promised, yet I doubt  
When each, however you reject him now,  
Believes you might be won hereafter still,  
Were not another to divide the field;  
Each upon each charging the exigence  
He will not see lies in himself alone,  
Might draw the scarcely sheathéd sword at once;  
Or stifled hate under a hollow truce  
Blaze out anew at some straw's provocation,  
And I perhaps not by to put it out.

*Just.* What can, what can be done then!

*Cipr.*

Oh, Justina,

Pardon this iteration. Think once more,  
Before your answer with its consequence

Travels upon my lip to destiny.  
I know you more than maiden-wise reserved  
To other importunities of love  
Than those which ev'n the pure for pure confess;  
Yet no cold statue, which, however fair,  
Could not inflame so fierce a passion; but  
A breathing woman with a beating heart,  
Already touch'd with pity, you confess,  
For these devoted men you cannot love.  
Well, then—I will not hint at such a bower  
As honourable wedlock would entwine  
About your father's age and your own youth,  
Which ev'n for him—and much less for yourself—  
You would not purchase with an empty hand.  
But yet, with no more of your heart within  
Than what you now confess to—pity—pity,  
For generous youth wearing itself away  
In thankless adoration at your door,  
Neglecting noble opportunities;  
Turning all love but yours to deadly hate—  
Sedate, and wise, and modestly resolved,  
Can you be, lady, of yourself so sure—  
(And surely they will argue your disdain  
As apt to yield as their devotion)—  
That, all beside so honourably faced,  
You, who now look with pity, and perhaps

(26)

With gratitude, upon their blundering zeal,  
May not be won to turn an eye less loath  
On one of them, and blessing one, save both?

*Just.* Alas! I know it is impossible—  
Not if they wasted all their youth in sighs,  
And even slavish importunities,  
I could but pity—pity all the more  
That all the less what only they implore  
To yield; so great a gulf between us lies.

*Cipr.* What—is the throne pre-occupied?

*Just.* If so,  
By one that Antioch dreams little of.  
But it grows late: and if we spoke till dawn,  
I have no more to say.

*Cipr.* Nor more will hear?

*Just.* Alas, sir, to what purpose? When, all said,  
Said too as you have said it—  
And I have but the same hard answer still;  
Unless to thank you once and once again,  
And charge you with my thankless errand back,  
But in such better terms,  
As, if it cannot stop ill blood, at least  
Shall stop blood-shedding 'tween these hapless men.

(27) *Cipr.* And shall the poor ambassador who fail'd  
In the behalf of those who sent him here,  
Hereafter dare to tell you how he sped

In making peace between them?

*Just.*

Oh, do but that,

And what poor human prayer can win from Heav'n,

You shall not be the poorer. So, good-night! [*Exit.*

*Cipr.* Good-night, good-night! Oh Lelio and Floro!  
If ever friends well turn'd to deadly foes,  
Wiser to fight than I to interpose.

*Lucifer (passing from behind).* The shaft has hit the  
mark; and by the care  
Of hellish surgery shall fester there. [*Exit.*

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## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The sea-shore; a storm raging.*

*Cipriano (cavalierly drest).* OH, mad, mad, mad, am-  
bition! to the skies  
Lifting to drop me deep as Hades down!—  
What! Cipriano—what the once so wise  
Cipriano—quit his wonted exercise  
Among the sober walks of old renown,  
To fly at love—to swell the wind with sighs  
Vainer than learning—doff the scholar's gown  
For cap and feather, and such airy guise  
In which triumphant love is wont to go,  
But wins less acceptation in her eyes—



The only eyes in which I cared to show—  
My heart beneath the borrow'd feather bleeding—  
Than in the sable suit of long ago,  
When heart-whole for another's passion pleading.  
She loves not Floro—loves not Lelio,  
Whose quarrel sets the city's throat agape,  
And turns her reputation to reproof  
With altercation of some dusky shape  
Haunting the twilight underneath her roof—  
(28) Which each believes the other:—and, for me,  
The guilty one of the distracted three,  
She closest veils herself, or waves aloof  
In scorn; or in such self-abasement sweet  
As sinks me deep and deeper at her feet,  
Bids me return—return for very shame,  
Back to my proper studies and good name,  
Nor waste a life on one who, let me pine  
To death, will never but in death be mine.  
Oh, she says well—oh, heart of stone and ice  
Unworthy of the single sacrifice  
Of one true heart's devotion. Oh divine  
Creature, whom all the glory and the worth  
That ever ravaged or redeem'd the earth  
Were scanty worship offered at your shrine!  
Oh Cipriano, master-fool of all  
The fools that unto thee for wisdom call;

Of supercilious Pallas first the mock,  
And now blind Cupid's scorn, and laughing-stock;  
Who in fantastic arrogance at odds  
With the Pantheon of your people's gods  
Ransack'd the heavens for one more pure and whole  
To fill the empty temple of the soul,  
Now caught by retribution in the mesh  
Of one poor piece of perishable flesh—  
What baser demon of the pit would buy  
With all your ruin'd aspirations!

*Lucifer (within).*

I!—

*Cipr.* What! The very winds and waters

Hear, and answer to the cry

She is deaf to!—Better thrown

On distracted nature's bosom

With some passion like my own

Torn and tortured: where the sun

In the elemental riot

Ere his daily reign half done,

Leaves half-quencht the tempest-drencht

Welkin scowling on the howling

Wilderness of waves that under

Slash of whirlwind, spur of lightning,

Roar of thunder, black'ning, whit'ning,

Fling them foaming on the shore—

Let confusion reign and roar!—

(29)



Lightnings, for your target take me!  
Waves, upon the sharp rock break me;  
Or into your monstrous hollow  
Back regurgitating hurl;  
Let the mad tornado whirl me  
To the furthest airy circle  
Dissipated of the sky,  
Or the gaping earth down-swallow  
To the centre!—

*Lucifer (entering).* By-and-bye.

*Cipr.* Hark again! and in her monstrous  
Labour, with a human cry  
Nature yearning—what portentous  
Glomeration of the storm  
Darkly cast in human form,  
Has she bolted!—

*Luc.* As among  
Flashes of the lightning flung  
Beside you, in its thunder now  
Aptly listen'd—

*Cipr.* What art thou?

*Luc.* One of a realm, though dimly in your charts  
Discern'd, so vast that as from out of it  
As from a fountain all the nations flow,  
Back they shall ebb again; and sway'd by One  
Who, without Oriental over-boast,

Because from him all kings their crowns derive,  
Is rightfully saluted King of kings,  
Whose reign is as his kingdom infinite,  
Whose throne is heaven, and earth his footstool, and  
Sun, moon, and stars his diadem and crown.  
Who at the first disposal of his kingdom  
And distribution into sea and land—  
Me, who for splendour of my birth and grand  
Capacities above my fellows shone,  
Star of the Morning, Lucifer, alone—  
Me he made captain of the host who stand  
Clad as the morning star about his throne.  
Enough for all ambition but my own;  
Who discontented with the all but all  
Of chiefest subject of Omnipotence  
Rebell'd against my Maker; insolence  
Avenged as soon as done on me and all  
Who bolster'd up rebellion, by a fall  
Far as from heav'n to Hades. Madness, I know;  
But worse than madness whining to repent  
Under a rod that never will relent.  
Therefore about the land and sea I go  
Arm'd with the very instrument of hate  
That blasted me: lightnings anticipate  
My coming, and the thunder rolls behind;  
Thus charter'd to enlarge among mankind,

(30)

And to recruit from human discontent  
My ranks in spirit, not in number, spent.  
Of whom, in spite of this brave gaberdine,  
I recognize thee one: thee, by the line  
Scarr'd on thy brow, though not so deep as mine;  
Thee by the hollow circles of those eyes  
Where the volcano smoulders but not dies:  
Whose fiery torrent running down has scarr'd  
The cheek that time had not so deeply marr'd.  
Do not I read thee rightly?

*Cipr.*

But too well;

However come to read me—

*Luc.*

By the light

Of my own darkness reading yours—how deep!  
But not, as mine is, irretrievable:  
Who from the fulness of my own perdition  
Would, as I may, revenge myself on him  
By turning to fruition your despair—  
What if I make you master at a blow,  
Not only of the easy woman's heart  
You now despair of as impregnable,  
And waiting but my word to let you in,  
(31) But lord of nature's secret, and the lore  
That shall not only with the knowledge, but  
Possess you with the very power of him

You sought so far and vainly for before:  
So far All-eyes, All-wise, Omnipotent—  
If not to fashion, able yet to shake  
That which the other took such pains to make—  
As in the hubbub round us; I who blurr'd  
The spotless page of nature at a word  
With darkness and confusion, will anon  
Clear it, to write another marvel on.—

By the word of power that binds  
And loosens; by the word that finds  
Nature's heart through all her rinds,  
Hearken, waters, fires, and winds;  
Having had your roar, once more  
Down with you, or get you gone.

*Cipr.* With the clatter and confusion  
Of the universe about me  
Reeling—all within, without me,—  
Dizzy, dazzled—if delusion,  
Waking, dreaming, seeing, seeming—  
Which I know not—only, lo!  
Like some mighty madden'd beast  
Bellowing in full career  
Of fury, by a sudden blow  
Stunn'd, and in a moment stopp'd  
All the roar, or into slow

Death-ward-drawing murmur, leaving  
Scarce the fallen carcase heaving,

With the fallen carcase dropp'd.—

Behold! the word scarce fallen from his lips,  
Swift almost as a human smile may chase  
A frown from some conciliated face,  
The world to concord from confusion slips:  
The winds that blew the battle up dead slain,  
Or with their tatter'd standards swept amain  
From heav'n; the billows of the erected deep  
Roll'd with their crests into the foaming plain;

(32) While the scared earth begins abroad to peep  
And smooth her ruffled locks as from a rent  
In the black centre of the firmament,  
Revenging his unnatural eclipse,  
The Lord of heav'n from its ulterior blue  
That widens round him as he pierces through  
The folded darkness, from his sovereign height  
Slays with a smile the dragon-gloom of night.

*Luc.* All you have heard and witness'd hitherto  
But a foretaste to quicken appetite  
For that substantial after-feast of power  
That I shall set you down to take your fill of:  
When not the fleeting elements alone  
Of wind, and fire, and water, floating wrack,  
But this same solid frame of earth and stone,

Yea, with the mountain loaded on her back,  
Reluctantly, shall answer to your spell  
From a more adamant heart stone-cold  
Than hers you curse for inaccessible.  
What, you would prove it? Let the mountain there  
Step out for witness. Listen, and behold.

Monster upshot of upheaving<sup>1</sup>  
Earth, by fire and flood conceiving;  
Shapeless ark of refuge, whither,  
When came deluge creeping round,  
Man retreated—to be drown'd—  
Now your granite anchor, fast  
In creation's centre, cast,  
Come with all your tackle cleaving  
Down before the magic blast—

*Cipr.* And the unwieldy vessel, lo!  
Rib and deck of rock, and shroud  
Of pine, top-gallanted with cloud,  
All her forest-canvas squaring,  
Down the undulating woodland  
As she flounders to and fro.  
All before her tearing, bearing  
Down upon us—

<sup>1</sup> *The Phenomena that follow, and are here supposed to be the magic illusions created in Cipriano's eyes, are in the original represented by theatrical machinery.*



*Luc.*

Anchor, ho!—

(33) Behold the ship in port! And what if freighted  
With but one jewel, worthy welcome more  
Than ever full-fraught Argosy awaited,  
At last descried by desperate eyes ashore;  
From the first moment of her topsail showing  
Like a thin cobweb spun 'twixt sea and sky;  
Then momentarily before a full wind blowing  
Into her full proportions, till athwart  
The seas that bound beneath her, by and bye  
She sweeps full sail into the cheering port—

Strangest bark that ever plied  
In despite of wind and tide,  
At the captain's magic summons  
Down your granite ribs divide,  
And show the jewel hid inside.

*Cipr.* Justina!—

*Luc.* Soft! The leap that looks so easy  
Yet needs a longer stride than you can master.

*Cipr.* Oh divine apparition, that I fain  
Would all my life as in Elysium lose  
Only by gazing after; and thus soon  
As rolling cloud across the long'd-for moon,  
The impitiable rocks enclose again!—  
But was it she indeed?

*Luc.*

She that shall be,



And yours, by means that, bringing her to you,  
Possess you of all nature, which in vain  
You sigh'd for ere for nature's masterpiece.  
And thus much, as I told you, only sent  
As foretaste of that great accomplishment,  
Which if you will but try for, you can reach  
By means which, if I practise, I can teach.

*Cipr.* And at what cost?

*Luc.* You that have flung so many years away  
In learning and in love that came to nothing,  
Think not to win the harvest in a day!  
The God you search for works, you know, by means  
(That your philosophers call second cause),  
And we by means must underwork him—

*Cipr.* Well?—

(34)

*Luc.* To comprehend, and, after, to constrain  
Whose mysteries you will not count as vain  
A year in this same mountain lock'd with me?—

*Cipr.* Where she is?—

*Luc.* As I told you, where shall be.  
At least this mountain after a short labour  
Has brought forth something better than a mouse;  
And what then after a whole year's gestation  
Accomplish under our joint midwifery,  
Under a bond by which you bind you mine  
In fewer and no redder drops than needs

The leech of land or water when he bleeds?  
Let us about—but first upon his base  
The mountain we must study in replace,  
That else might puzzle your geography.  
Come, take your stand upon the deck with me,  
Till with her precious cargo safe inside,  
And all her forest-colours flying wide,  
The mighty vessel put again to sea—  
What, are you ready?—Wondrous smack,  
    As without a turn or tack  
    Hither come, so thither back,  
    And let subside the ruffled deep  
    Of earth to her primæval sleep.—

How steadily her course the good ship trims,  
While Antioch far into the distance swims,  
With all her follies bubbling in the wake;  
Her scholars that more hum than honey make:  
Muses so chaste as never of their kind  
Would breed, and Cupid deaf as well as blind:  
For Cipriano, wearied with the toil  
Of so long working on a thankless soil,  
At last embarking upon magic seas  
In a more wondrous Argo than of old,  
Sets sail with me for such Hesperides  
As glow with more than dragon-guarded gold.

[*Exeunt.*

## ACT III.

(35)

SCENE I. *Before the mountain.* CIPRIANO.

*Cipriano.* Now that at last in his eternal round  
Hyperion, after skirting either pole,  
Of his own race has set the flaming goal  
In heav'n of my probation under-ground:  
Up from the mighty Titan with his feet  
Touching the centre, and his forest-hair  
Entangling with the stars; whose middle womb  
Of two self-buried lives has been the tomb;  
At last, my year's apprenticeship complete,  
I rise to try my cunning, and as one  
Arm'd in the dark who challenges the sun.  
You heav'ns, for me your azure brows with cloud  
Contract, or to your inmost depth unshroud:  
Thou sapphire-floating counterpart below,  
<sup>Obsequious of</sup>  
~~Obedient to~~ my moon-like magic flow:  
For me you mountains fall, you valleys rise,  
With all your brooks and fountains far withdrawn;  
You forests shudder underneath my sighs;  
And whatsoever breathes in earth and skies;  
You birds that on the bough salute the dawn;  
And you wild creatures that through wood and glen  
Do fly the hunter, or the hunter flies;

Yea, man himself, most terrible to men;  
Troop to my word, about my footstep fawn;  
Yes, ev'n you spirits that by viewless springs  
Move and perplex the tangled web of things,  
Wherever in the darkest crypt you lurk  
Of nature, nature to my purpose work;  
That not the dead material element,  
But complicated with the life beyond  
Up to pure spirit, shall my charm resent,  
And take the motion of my magic wand;  
And, once more shaken on her ancient throne,  
In me old nature a new master own.

(36) *Lucifer.* But how is this, Cipriano, that misled  
By hasty passion you affront the day  
Ere master of the art of darkness?

*Cipr.* Nay,  
By that same blazing witness overhead  
Standing in heav'n to mark the time foretold,  
Since first imprison'd in this mountain-hold  
My magic so preluded with the dread  
Preliminary kingdom of the dead,  
That not alone the womb of general earth  
Which Death has crowded thick with second birth  
But monuments with marble lips composed  
To dream till doomsday, suddenly disclosed,  
And woke their sleepers centuries too soon

To stare upon the old remember'd moon.  
Wearied of darkness, I will see the day:  
Sick of the dead, the living will assay:  
And if the ghastly year I have gone through  
Bear half its promised harvest, will requite  
With a too warm good-morrow the long night  
That one cold living heart consigned me to.

*Luc.* Justina!

*Cipr.* Aye, Justina: now no more  
Obsequiously sighing at the door  
That never open'd, nor the heart of stone  
On which so long I vainly broke my own;  
But of her soul and body, when and how  
I will, I claim the forfeit here and now.

*Luc.* Enough: the hour is come; do thou design  
The earth with circle, pentagram, and trine;  
The wandering airs with incantation twine;  
While through her sleep-enchanted sense I shake  
The virgin constancy I cannot break.

*(Clouds roll before the mountain, hiding CIPRIANO.)*  
Thou nether realm of darkness and despair,  
Whose fire-enthronéd emperor am I;  
Where many-knotted till the word they lie,  
Your subtlest spirits at the word untie,  
And breathe them softly to this upper air;  
With subtle soft insinuation fair

(37)

Of foul result encompass and attain  
The chastity of the rebellious saint  
Who dares the Spirit of this world defy.  
Spirits that do shapeless float  
In darkness as in light the mote,  
At my summons straightway take  
Likeness of the fairest make,  
And, her sleeping sense about  
Seal'd from all the world without,  
Through the bolted eyelids creep;  
Entheatre the walls of sleep  
With an Eden where the sheen  
Of the leaf and flower between  
All is freshest, yet with Eve's  
Apple peeping though the leaves;  
Through whose magic mazes may  
Melancholy fancy stray  
Till she lose herself, or into  
Softer passion melt away:  
While the scent-seducing rose  
Gazing at her as she goes  
With her turning as she turns,  
Into her his passion burns;  
While the wind among the boughs  
Whispers half-remember'd vows;



Nightingale interpreters  
Into their passion translate hers;  
And the murmurs of a stream  
Down one current draw the dream.  
While for hidden chorus, I  
At her dreaming ear supply  
Such a comment as her own  
Heart to nature's shall atone:  
Till the secret influence  
Of the genial season even  
Holy blood that sets to heaven  
Draws into the lower sense;  
Till array'd in angel guise  
Earthly memories surprise  
Ev'n the virgin soul and win  
Holy pity's self to sin.

*(The clouds roll away, and discover JUSTINA asleep in her chamber.)*

*Lucifer (at her ear).* Come forth, come forth, Justina, come; for scared  
Winter is vanisht, and victorious Spring  
Has hung her garland on the boughs he bared:  
Come forth; there is a time for every thing.

*Justina (in her sleep).* That was my father's voice—  
come, Livia—

My mantle—oh, not want it?—well then, come.

*Luc.* Aye, come abroad, Justina; it is Spring;  
The world is not with sunshine and with leaf  
Renew'd to be the tomb of ceaseless grief;  
Come forth: there is a time for every thing.

*Just.* How strange it is—  
I think the garden never look'd so gay  
As since my father died.

*Luc.* Ev'n so: for now  
Returning with the summer wind, the hours  
Dipt in the sun re-dress the grave with flowers,  
And make new wreaths for the survivor's brow;  
Whose spirit not to share were to refuse  
The power that all creating, all renews  
With self-diffusive warmth, that, with the sun's,  
At this due season through creation runs,  
Nor in the first creation more exprest  
Than by the singing builder of the nest  
That waves on this year's leaf, or by the rose  
That underneath them in his glory glows;  
Life's fountain, flower, and crown; without whose  
giving  
Life itself were not, nor, without, worth living.

*Chorus of Voices.* Life's fountain, flower, and crown;  
without whose giving  
Life itself were not, nor, without, worth living.

*Song.*

(39)

Who that in his hour of glory  
Walks the kingdom of the rose,  
And misapprehends the story  
Which through all the garden blows;  
Which the southern air who brings  
It touches, and the leafy strings  
Lightly to the touch respond;  
And nightingale to nightingale  
Answering a bough beyond—

*Chorus.* Nightingale to nightingale  
Answering a bough beyond.

*Just.* These serenaders—singing their old songs  
Under one's window—

*Luc.* Aye, and if nature must decay or cease  
Without it; what of nature's masterpiece?  
Not in her outward lustre only, but  
Ev'n in the soul within the jewel shut;  
What but a fruitless blossom; or a lute  
Without the hand to touch it music-mute:  
Incense that will not rise to heav'n unfired;  
By that same vernal spirit uninspired  
That sends the blood up from the heart, and speaks  
In the rekindled lustre of the cheeks?

*Chorus.* Life's fountain, flower, and crown; without  
whose giving  
Life itself were not, nor, without, worth living.

*Song.*

Lo, the golden Girasolé,  
That to him by whom she burns,  
Over heaven slowly, slowly,  
As he travels ever turns;  
And beneath the wat'ry main  
When he sinks, would follow fain,  
Follow fain from west to east,  
And then from east to west again.

*Chorus.* Follow would from west to east,  
And then from east to west again.

*Just.* He beckon'd us, and then again was gone;  
Oh look! under the tree there, Livia—  
(40) Where he sits—reading—scholar-like indeed!—  
With the dark hair that was so white upon  
His shoulder—but how deadly pale his face!—  
And, statue-still-like, the quaint evergreen  
Up and about him creeps, as one has seen  
Round some old marble in a lonely place.

*Luc.* Aye, look on that—for, as the story runs,  
Ages ago, when all the world was young,

That ivy was a nymph of Latium,  
 Whose name was Hedera: so passing fair  
 That all who saw fell doting on her; but  
 Herself so icy-cruel, that her heart  
 Froze dead all those her eyes had set on fire.  
 Whom the just God who walk'd that early world,  
 By right-revenging metamorphosis  
 Changed to a thing so abject-amorous,  
 She grovels on the ground to catch at any  
 Wither'd old trunk or sapling, in her way:  
 So little loved as loath'd, for strangling those  
<sup>Whom once</sup> ~~Round whom~~ her deadly-deathless arms <sup>enclose</sup> ~~once close.~~

*Song.*

So for her who having lighted  
 In another heart the fire,  
 Then shall leave it unrequited  
 In its ashes to expire:  
 After her that sacrifice  
 Through the garden burns and cries;  
 In the sultry breathing air:  
 In the flowers that turn and stare—  
 “What has she to do among us,  
 Falsely wise and frozen fair?”

*Luc.* Listen, Justina, listen and beware.

*Just.* Again! That voice too?—But you know my  
father

Is ill—is in his chamber—

How sultry 't is—the street is full and close—

Let us get home—why do they stare at us?

(41) And murmur something—“Cipriano?—Where

“Is Cipriano?—lost to us—some say,

“And to himself,—self-slain—mad—Where is he?

Alas, alas, I know not—

*Luc.* Come and see—

*Justina (waking).* Mercy upon me! Who is this?

*Luc.* Justina, your good angel,

Who, moved by your relenting to the sighs

Of one who lost himself for your disdain,

Will lead you to the cavern where he lies

Subsisting on the memory of your eyes—

*Just.* 'T was all a dream!—

*Luc.* That dreaming you fulfil.

*Just.* Oh, no, with all my waking soul renounce.

*Luc.* But, dreaming or awake, the soul is one,  
And the deed purposed in Heaven's eyes is done.

*Just.* Oh Christ! I cannot argue—I can pray,  
Christ Jesus, oh, my Saviour, Jesu Christ!  
Let not hell snatch away from Thee the soul  
Thou gav'st Thy life to save!—Livia!—Livia!



*Enter LIVIA.*

Where is my father? where am I? Oh, I know—  
In my own chamber—and my father—oh!—  
But, Livia, who was it that but now  
Was here—here in my very chamber—

*Livia.*

Madam?

*Just.* You let none in? oh, no! I know it—but  
Some one there was—here—now—as I cried out—  
A dark, strange figure—

*Livia.*

My child, compose yourself;  
No one has come, or gone, since you were laid  
In your noon-slumber. This was but a dream.  
The air is heavy; and the melancholy  
You live alone with since your father's death—

*Just.* A dream, a dream indeed—oh Livia,  
That leaves his pressure yet upon my arm—  
And that without the immediate help of God  
I had not overcome—Oh, but the soul,  
The soul must be unsteady in the faith,  
So to be shaken even by a dream.  
Oh, were my father here! But he 's at rest—  
I know he is—upon his Saviour's breast;  
And—who knows!—may have carried up my cries  
Ev'n to His ear upon whose breast he lies!

(42)

Give me my mantle, Livia; I'll to the church;  
Where if but two or three are met in prayer  
Together, He has promised to be there—  
And I shall find Him.

*Livia.* Oh, take care, take care!  
You know the danger—in broad daylight too—  
Or take me with you.

*Just.* And endanger two?  
Best serve us both by keeping close at home,  
Praying for me as I will pray for you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. *Entrance to the mountain cavern.* CIPRIANO  
*in a magician's dress, with wand, &c.*

What! do the powers of earth, and air, and hell,  
Against their upstart emperor rebel?  
Lo, in obedience to the rubric dark  
The dusky cheek of earth with mystic mark  
Of pentagram and circle I have lined,  
And hung my fetters on the viewless wind,  
And yet the star of stars, for whose ascent  
I ransack all the lower firmament,  
In unapparent darkness lags behind.  
Whom once again with adjuration new  
Of all the spirits whom these signs subdue,  
Whether by land or water, night or day,



*The Figure (unveiling a skull and vanishing as it speaks).*

Behold the World and its delight  
Is dust and ashes, dust and ashes, dust—

*Cipr. (flinging down his Wand).* Lucifer! Lucifer!  
Lucifer!—

*Luc.* My son!

*Cipr.* Quick! with a word—

How now?—

With a word—at once—

With all your might—

*Luc.* Well, what with it?—

*Cipr.* The charm—

Shatter it! shatter it, I say!—Is 't done?

Is 't vanisht—

*Luc.* What has thus unsensed you?

*Cipr.* Oh!—

You know it—saw it—did it—

*Luc.* Come—be a man:

What, scared with a mere death's-head?

*Cipr.* Death's, indeed!—

*Luc.* What was it more?—

*Cipr.* Justina's seeming self—

After what solitary labour wrought,

And after what re-iterated charms,

Step by step here in all her beauty brought (44)  
Within the very circle of these arms,  
Then to death's grisly lineaments resign'd  
Slipt through them, and went wailing down the wind  
"Ashes and dust and ashes"—

Nay, nay, pretend not that the fault was mine—  
The written incantation line by line  
I mutter'd, and the mystic figure drew;  
You only are to blame—you only, you,  
Cajoling me, or by your own cajoled,  
Bringing me fleshless death for the warm life  
For which my own eternal life is sold.

*Luc.* You were too rash,—I warn'd you, and if not,  
Who thinks at a first trial to succeed?  
Another time—

*Cipr.* No, no! No more of it!  
What, have I so long dabbled with the dead,  
That all I touch turns to corruption?  
Were it indeed herself—her living self—  
Till underneath my deadly contact slain;  
Or having died during the terrible year  
I have been living worse than dead with you,  
What I beheld not she, but what she was,  
Out of the tomb that only owns my spell  
Drawn into momentary lifeliness  
To mock me with the phantom of a beauty

Whose lineaments the mere impapable air  
Let in upon disfeatures—was it she?

*Luc.* She lives, and shall be yours.

*Cipr.* Not if herself,

In more than all her living beauty breathing,  
Came to efface that deadly counterfeit!—  
Oh, what have I been doing all this while,  
From which I wake as from a guilty dream,  
But with my guilt's accomplice at my side  
To prove its terrible reality?  
Where were my ears, my eyes, my senses? where  
The mother-wit which serves the common boor,  
Not to resent that black academy,  
(45) Mess-mating with dead men and living fiends,  
And not to know no good could come of it?—  
My better self—the good that in me grew  
By nature, and by good instruction till'd,  
Under your shadow turn'd to poisonous weed;  
And ev'n the darker art you bribed me with,  
To master, if by questionable ways,  
The power I sigh'd for in my better days,  
So little reaching to the promised height,  
As sinking me beneath the lowest fiend,  
Who, for the inestimable self I sold,  
Pays the false self you made me with false gold!

*Luc.* When will blind fury, falling foul of all,  
Light where it should? Suppose a fault so far,



As knowledge working through unpractised hands  
Might fail at first encounter; all men know  
How a mere sand will check a vast machine;  
And in these complicated processes  
An agency so insignificant  
As to be wholly overlookt it was  
At the last moment foil'd us.

*Cipr.*

But she lives!

Lives—from your clutches saved, and saved from  
mine—

Ev'n from that only shadow of my guilt  
That could have touch'd her, saved—unguilty shame,  
That now is left with all the guilt to me.  
Oh that I knew a God in all the heav'ns  
To thank, or ev'n of Tartarus—ev'n thee,  
Thee would I bless, whatever power it be  
That with that shadow saved her, and mock'd me  
Back to my better senses. If not she,  
What was it?

*Luc.*

What you saw.

*Cipr.*

A phantom?

*Luc.*

Well,

A phantom.

*Cipr.*

But how raised?

*Luc.*

What if by her?

She is a sorcerer as her father was.

*Cipr.* A sorcerer! She a sorcerer! oh, black lie

(46)

To whiten your defeat! and, were it true,  
Oh mighty doctor to be foil'd at last  
By a mere woman!—If a sorcerer,  
Then of a sort you deal not with, nor hell—  
And ev'n Olympus likes the sport too well—  
Raising a phantom not to draw me down  
To deeper sin, but with its ghastly face  
And hollow voice both telling of the tomb  
They came from, warning me of what complexion  
Were all the guilty wishes of this world.  
But let the phantom go where gone it is—  
Not of what mock'd me, but what saved herself,  
By whatsoever means—aye, what was it,  
That pitiful agency you told me of  
So insignificant, as overlookt  
At the last moment thwarted us?

*Luc.* What matter?

When now provided for, and which when told  
You know not—

*Cipr.* Which I will be told to know—  
For as one ris'n from darkness tow'rd the light,  
A veil seems clearing from before my sight—  
She is a sorcerer, and of the kind  
That old Lisandro died suspected of?—  
Oh cunning doctor, to outwit yourself,  
Outwitted as you have been, and shall be

By him who if your devilish magic fail'd  
To teach its purposed mischief,  
Thus on his teacher turns it back in full  
To force him to confess the counter-power  
That foil'd us both. *(He catches up his wand.)*

*Luc.* Poor creature that you are!  
Did not the master from his scholars hold  
One sleight of hand that masters all the rest,  
What magic needed to compel the devil  
To convict those who find him out too late?  
Yet to increase your wrath by leaving it  
Blind in the pit your guilt consigns you to, (47)  
I shall not answer—

*Cipr.* Then if your own hell  
Cannot enforce you; by that Unknown Power  
That saved Justina from your fangs, although  
Yourself you cannot master, if you know,  
I charge you name him to me!—

*Luc. (after a great flash of lightning, and thunder).*  
Jesus Christ!

*Cipr. (after a pause).* Ev'n so!—Christ Jesus—Jesus  
Christ—the same

That poor Lisandro died suspected of,  
And I had heard and read of with the rest  
But to despise, in spite of all the blood  
By which the chosen few their faith confess'd—

The prophet-carpenter of Nazareth,  
Poor, persecuted, buffeted, reviled,  
Spit upon, crown'd with thorns, and crucified  
With thieves—the Son of God—the Son of man,  
Whose shape He took to teach them how to live,  
And doff'd upon the cross to do away  
The sin and death you and your devil-deities  
Had heap'd on him from the beginning?

*Luc.*

Yea!—

*Cipr.* Of the one sun of Deity one ray  
That was before the world was, and that made  
The world and all that is within it?

*Luc.*

Yea!

*Cipr.* Eternal and Almighty then: and yet  
Infinite Centre as he is of all  
The all but infinite universe he made,  
With eyes to see me plotting, and with ear  
To hear one solitary creature pray,  
From one dark corner of his kingdom?

*Luc.*

Yea!

*Cipr.* All one, all when, all where, all good, all mighty,  
All eye, all ear, all self-integrity—  
Methinks this must be He of whom I read  
In Greek and Roman sages dimly guess'd,  
(48) But never until now fully confest  
In this poor carpenter of Nazareth,

With poor Justina for his confessor—  
And now by thee—by thee—once and again  
Spite of thyself—for answer me you must,  
Convicted at the bar of your own thunder—  
Is this the God for whom I sought so long  
In mine own soul and those of other men,  
Who from the world's beginning till to-day  
Groped or were lost in utter darkness?

*Luc.* Yea!

*Cipr.* Enough: and your confession shall be mine—

*Luc.* And to like purpose; to believe, confess,  
And tremble, in the everlasting fire  
Prepared for all who Him against their will  
Confess, and in their deeds deny him—

*Cipr.* Oh,  
Like a flogg'd felon after full confession  
Releas't at last!

*Luc.* To bind you mine for ever.

*Cipr.* Thine! What art thou?

*Luc.* The god whom you must worship.

*Cipr.* There is no God but one, whom you and I  
Alike acknowledge, as in Jesus Christ  
Reveal'd to man. What other god art thou?

*Luc.* Antichrist! He that all confessing Christ  
Confess; Satan, the Serpent, the first Tempter,  
Who tempted the first Father of mankind

With the same offer to a like result  
That I have tempted thee with; yea, had power  
Even Him in his humanity to tempt,  
Though Him in vain; the god of this world; if  
False god, true devil; true angel as I was,  
Sun of the morning, Lucifer, who fell  
(As first I told thee, hadst thou ears to hear)  
For my rebellion down from heaven to hell  
More terrible than any Tartarus,  
Where over those who fell with me I reign.  
Whom, though with them bound in the self-same chain  
(49) Of everlasting torment, God allows  
To reach my hands out of my prison-house  
On all who like me from their God rebel,  
As thou hast done.

*Cipr.* Not when for God I knew him.

*Luc.* Aye, but who but for pride and lust like mine  
Had known Him sooner—

*Cipr.* And had sooner known  
But for thy lying gods that shut Him out.

*Luc.* Which others much less wise saw through before.

*Cipr.* All happy they then! But all guilty I,  
Yet thus far guiltless of denying Him  
Whom even thou confessest.

*Luc.* But too late—  
Already mine, if not so sworn before,



Yet by this bond—

*Cipr.* For service unperform'd!

But unperform'd, or done, and payment due,  
I fling myself and all my debt on Him  
Who died to undertake them—

*Luc.* He is the Saviour of the innocent,  
Not of the guilty.

*Cipr.* Who alone need saving!

*Luc.* Damnation is the sinner's just award,  
And He is just.

*Cipr.* And being just, will not  
For wilful blindness tax the want of light:  
And All-good as Almighty, and therefore  
As merciful as just, will not renounce  
Ev'n the worst sinner who confesses Him,  
And testifies confession with his blood.  
Which, not to waste a moment's argument,  
Too like the old logic that I lost my life in,  
And hangs for ever dead upon the cross;  
I will forthwith shout my confession,  
Into the general ear of Antioch,  
And from the evidence of thine own mouth,  
Not thee alone, but all thy lying gods,  
Convict; and you convicting before God,  
Myself by man's tribunal judged and damn'd,  
Trust by my own blood mixing with the tide

(50)

That flow'd for me from the Redeemer's side,  
From those few damning drops to wash me free  
That bound me thine for ever—

*Luc. (seizing him).* Take my answer—

*Cipr. (escaping).* Oh, Saviour of Justina, save  
Thou me! [Exeunt.]

SCENE III. *The Hall of Justice in Antioch; AURELIO,  
FABIO, SENATORS, &c., just risen from Council.*

*Aurelio.* You have done well indeed; the very Church  
These Christians flock'd to for safe blasphemy  
Become the very net to catch them in.  
How many, think you?

*Fabio.* Not many, sir,  
As some that are of the most dangerous.

*Aur.* Among the rest this girl, Lisandro's daughter,  
As you and I know, Fabio, to our cost:  
But now convicted and condemn'd is safe  
From troubling us or Antioch any more.  
Come, such good service asks substantial thanks;  
What shall it be?

*Fabio.* No other, if you please,  
Than my son Floro's liberation,  
Whom not without good reason for so long  
You keep under the city's lock and key.

*Aur.* As my own Lelio, and for a like cause;

Who both distracted by her witchery  
Turn'd from fast friends to deadly enemies,  
And, in each other's lives, so aimed at ours.  
But no more chance of further quarrel now  
For one whom Death anticipates for bride  
Ere they again gird weapon at their side,  
Set them both free forthwith.— [Exit FABIO.

This cursèd woman whose fair face and foul  
Behaviour was the city's talk and trouble,  
Now proved a sorceress, is well condemn'd;  
Not only for my sake and Fabio's,  
But for all Antioch, whose better youth (51)  
She might, like ours, have carried after her  
Through lust and duel into blasphemy.

*Re-enter FABIO with LELIO and FLORO.*

*Lelio.* Once more, sir, at your feet—

*Aur.* Up, both of you.

Floro and Lelio, you understand  
What I have done was of no testy humour,  
But for three several sakes—  
Your own, your fathers', and the city's peace.  
Henceforward, by this seasonable use  
Of public law for private purpose check'd,  
Your fiery blood to better service turn.  
Take hands, be friends; the cause of quarrel gone—

*Lelio.* The cause of quarrel gone!—

*Aur.* Be satisfied;

You will know better by and bye; meanwhile  
Taking upon my word that so it is;  
Which were it not indeed, you were not here  
To doubt.

*Floro (aside).* Oh flimsy respite of revenge!—

*Aur.* And now the business of the day well crown'd  
With this so happy reconciliation,  
You and I, Fabio, to our homes again,  
Our homes once more, replenish'd with the peace  
We both have miss'd so long.—What noise is that?

*(Cries without.)* Stop him! A madman! Stop him!—

*Aur.* What is it, Fabio?

*Florio.* One like mad indeed,  
In a strange garb, with flaring eyes, and hair  
That streams behind him as he flies along,  
Dragging a cloud of rabble after him.

*Aur.* This is no place for either—shut the doors,  
And post the soldiers to keep peace without—

*(Cries without.)* Stop him!

*Florio and Lelio.* 'T is Cipriano!—

*Aur.* Cipriano!—

(52)

*Enter CIPRIANO.*

*Cipriano.* Aye, Cipriano, Cipriano's self,

Heretofore mad as you that call him so,  
Now first himself.—Noble Aurelio,  
Who sway'st the sword of Rome in Antioch;  
And you, companions of my youthful love  
And letters; you grave senate ranged above;  
And you whose murmuring multitude below  
Do make the marble hall of justice rock  
From base to capital—hearken unto me:  
Yes, I am Cipriano: I am he  
So long and strangely lost, now strangely found—  
The famous doctor of your schools, renown'd  
Not Antioch only but the world about  
For learning's prophet-paragon forsooth;  
Who long pretending to provide the truth  
For other men in fields where never true  
Wheat, but a crop of mimic darnel grew,  
Reap'd nothing for himself but doubt, doubt, doubt.  
Then 't was that looking with despair and ruth  
Over the blasted harvest of my youth,  
I saw Justina: saw, and put aside  
The barren Pallas for a mortal bride  
Divinelier fair than she is feign'd to be:  
But in whose deep-entempled chastity  
That look'd down holy cold upon my fire,  
Lived eyes that but re-doubled vain desire.  
Till this new passion that more fiercely prey'd

Upon the wither'd spirit of dismay'd  
Ambition, swiftly by denial blew  
To fury that, transcending all control,  
I made away the ruin of my soul  
To one whom no chance tempest at my feet  
In the mid tempest of temptation threw.  
Who blinding me with the double deceit  
Of loftier aspiration and more low  
Than mortal or immortal man should owe  
Fulfill'd for me, myself for his I bound;  
(53) With him and death and darkness closeted  
In yonder mountain, while about its head  
The sun his garland of the seasons wound,  
In the dark school of magic I so read,  
And wrought to such a questionable power  
The black forbidden art I travail'd in,  
That though the solid mountain from his base  
With all his forest I might counterplace,  
I could not one sweet solitary flower  
Of beauty to my magic passion win.  
Because her God was with her in that hour  
To guard her virtue more than mountain-fast:  
That only God, whom all my learning past  
Fail'd to divine, but from the very foe  
That would have kept Him from me come to know,  
I come to you, to witness and make known:



One God, eternal, absolute, alone;  
Of whom Christ Jesus—Jesus Christ, I say—  
And, Antioch, open all your ears to-day—  
Of that one Godhead one authentic ray,  
Visor'd awhile his Godhead in man's make,  
Man's sin and death upon Himself to take;  
For man made man; by man unmade and slain  
Upon the cross that for mankind He bore—  
Dead—buried—and in three days ris'n again  
To His hereditary glory, bearing  
All who with Him on earth His sorrow sharing  
With Him shall dwell in glory evermore.  
And all the gods I worship'd heretofore,  
And all that you now worship and adore,  
From thundering Zeus to cloven-footed Pan,  
But lies and idols, by the hand of man  
Of brass and stone—fit emblems as they be,  
With ears that hear not; eyes that cannot see;  
And multitude where only One can be—  
From man's own lewd imagination built;  
By that same devil held to that old guilt  
Who tempted me to new. To whom indeed  
If with my sin and blood myself I fee'd  
For ever his—that bond of sin and blood  
I trust to cancel in the double flood  
Of baptism past, and the quick martyrdom

To which with this confession I am come.  
Oh delegate of Cæsar to devour  
The little flock of Jesus Christ! Behold  
One lost sheep just admitted to the fold  
Through the pure stream that rolling down the same  
Mountain in which I sinn'd, and as I came  
By holy hands administer'd, to-day  
Shall wash the mountain of my sins away.  
Lo, here I stand for judgment; by the blow  
Of sudden execution, or such slow  
Death as the devil shall, to maintain his lies,  
By keeping life alive in death, devise.  
Hack, rack, dismember, burn—or crucify,  
Like Him who died to find me; Him that I  
Will die to find; for whom, with whom, to die  
Is life; and life without, and all his lust  
But dust and ashes, dust and ashes, dust—

*(He falls senseless to the ground.)*

*Aurelio (after a long pause).* So public and audacious  
blasphemy

Demands as instant vengeance. Wretched man,  
Arise and hear your sentence—

*Lelio.*

Oh, sir, sir!

You speak to ice and marble—Cipriano!  
Oh look'd for long, and best for ever lost!  
But he is mad—he knows not what he says—

You would not, surely, on a madman visit  
What only sane confession makes a crime?

*Aur.* I never know how far such blasphemy,  
Which seems to spread like wild-fire in the world,  
Be fault or folly: only this I know,  
I dare not disobey the stern decree  
That Cæsar makes my office answer for.  
Especially when one is led away  
Of such persuasion and authority,  
Still drawing after him the better blood  
Of Antioch, to better or to worse.

(55)

*Lelio.* Cipriano! Cipriano! Yet, pray the gods  
He be past hearing me!

*Fabio (to AURELIO).* Sir, in your ear—  
Justina's hour is come; and through the room  
Where she was doom'd, she passes to her doom.

*Aur.* Let us be gone; they must not look on her,  
Nor know she is to die until "to die"  
Be past predicament. Here let her wait,  
Till he she drew along with her to sin  
Revive to share with her its punishment.  
Come, Lelio—come, Floro—be assured  
I loved and honour'd this man as yourselves  
Have honour'd him—but now—

*Lelio.* Nay, sir, but—

*Aur.* Nay,

Not I, but Cæsar, Lelio. Come away.

[*Exeunt. Then JUSTINA is brought in by soldiers and left alone.*]

*Just.* All gone—all silence—and the sudden stroke,  
Whose only mercy I besought, delay'd  
To make my pang the fiercer.—What is here?—  
Dead?—By the doom perhaps I am to die,  
And laid across the threshold of the road  
To trip me up with terror—Yet not so,  
If but the life, once lighted here, has flown  
Up to that living Centre that my own  
Now trembles to!—God help him, breathing still?—  
—Cipriano!—

*Cipr.* Aye, I am ready—I can rise—  
Is my time come?—Oh, God!  
Have I repented and confess'd too late,  
And this terrible witness of my crime  
Stands at the door of death from which it came  
To draw me deeper—

*Just.* Cipriano!

*Cipr.* Yet  
Not yet disfeatured—nor the voice—  
Oh, if not *That*—this time unsummon'd—come  
(56) To take me with you where I raised you from—  
Once more—once more—assure me!—

*Just. (taking his hand).* Cipriano!—

*Cipr.* And this, too, surely, is a living hand:  
Though cold, oh, cold indeed—but yet, but yet,  
Not dust and ashes, dust and ashes—

*Just.* No—

But soon to be—

*Cipr.* But soon—but soon to be—  
But not as then?—

*Just.* I understand you not—

*Cipr.* I scarce myself—I must have been asleep—  
But now not dreaming?

*Just.* No, not dreaming.

*Cipr.* No—

This is the judgment-hall of Antioch,  
In which—I scarcely mind how long ago—  
Is sentence pass'd on me?

*Just.* This is indeed  
The judgment-hall of Antioch; but why  
You here, and what the judgment you await,  
I know not—

*Cipr.* No.—But stranger yet to me  
Why you yourself, Justina.—Oh my God!

~~It flashes all across me.~~

What, all your life long giving God his due,  
Is treason unto Cæsar?—

*Just.* Aye, Cipriano—  
Against his edict having crept inside

God's fold with that good Shepherd for my guide,  
My Saviour Jesus Christ!

*Cipr.* My Saviour too,  
And Shepherd—oh, the only good and true  
Shepherd and Saviour—

*Just.* You confess Him! *You*  
Confess Him, Cipriano!

*Cipr.* With my blood:  
Which being all to that confession pledged,  
Now waits but to be paid.

(57) *Just.* Oh, we shall die,  
And go to heav'n together!

*Cipr.* Amen! Amen!—  
And yet—

*Just.* You do not fear—and yet no shame—  
What I have faced so long, that present dread  
Is almost lost in long anticipation—

*Cipr.* I fear not for this mortal. Would to God  
This guilty blood by which in part I trust  
To pay the forfeit of my soul with Heav'n  
Would from man's hand redeem the innocence  
That such atonement needs not.

*Just.* Oh, to all  
One faith and one atonement—

*Cipr.* But if both,  
If both indeed must perish by the doom



That one deserves and cries for—Oh, Justina,  
Who upward ever with the certain step  
Of faith hast follow'd unrepress'd by sin;  
Now that thy foot is almost on the floor  
Of heav'n, pray Him who opens thee the door,  
Let with thee one repenting sinner in!

*Just.* What more am I? And were I close to Him  
As he upon whose breast he lean'd on here,  
No intercessor but Himself between  
Himself and the worst sinner of us all—  
If but repenting we believe in Him.

*Cipr.* I do believe—I do repent—my faith  
Have sign'd in water, and will seal in blood—

*Just.* I have no other hope, but, in that, all.

*Cipr.* Oh hope that almost is accomplishment,  
Believing all with nothing to repent!

*Just.* Oh, none so good as not to need—so bad  
As not to find, His mercy. If you doubt  
Because of your long dwelling in the darkness  
To which the light was folly—oh 't was shown  
To the poor shepherd long before the wise;  
And if to me, as simple—oh, not mine,  
Not mine, oh God! the glory—not ev'n theirs  
From whom I drew it, and—Oh, Cipriano,  
Methinks I see them bending from the skies  
To take me up to them!

*Cipr.* Whither could I  
But into heaven's remotest corner creep,  
Where I might only but discern thee, lost  
With those you love in glory—

*Just.* Hush! hush! hush!  
These are wild words—if I so speak to one  
So wise, while I am nothing—  
But as you know—Oh, do not think of me,  
But Him, into whose kingdom all who come  
Are as His angels—

*Cipr.* Aye, but to come there!—  
Where if all intercession, even thine,  
Be vain—you say so—yet before we pass  
The gate of death together, as we shall—  
If then to part—for ever, and for ever—  
Unless with your forgiveness ~~in my hand—~~  
~~But say that you forgive me!—~~

*Just.* I forgive!  
Still I, and I, again! Oh, Cipriano,  
Pardon and intercession both alike  
With Him alone; and had I to forgive—  
Did not He pray upon the cross for those  
Who slew Him—as I hope to do on mine  
For mine—He bids us bless our enemies  
And persecutors; which I think, I think,  
You were not, Cipriano—why do you shudder?—

Save in pursuit of that—if vain to me,  
Now you know all—

*Cipr.* I now know all—but you  
Not that, which asking your forgiveness for,  
I dare not name to you, for fear the hand  
I hold as anchor-fast to, break away,  
And I drive back to hell upon a blast  
That roar'd behind me to these very doors,  
But stopt—ev'n in the very presence stopt,  
That most condemns me his.

*Just.* Alas, alas, (59)  
Again all wild to me. The time draws short—  
Look not to me, but Him tow'rd whom alone  
Sin is, and pardon comes from—

*Cipr.* Oh, Justina,  
You know not how enormous is my sin—

*Just.* I know, not as His mercy infinite.

*Cipr.* To Him—to thee—to Him through thee—

*Just.* 'T is written,  
Not all the sand of ocean, nor the star  
Of heav'n so many as His mercies are.

*Cipr.* What! ev'n for one who, mad with pouring  
vows  
Into an unrelenting human ear,  
Gave himself up to Antichrist—the Fiend—  
Though then for such I knew him not—to gain

By darkness all that love had sought in vain!  
—Speak to me—if but that hereafter I  
Shall never, never, hear your voice again—  
Speak to me—

*Just.* (*after a long pause*). By the Saviour on His  
cross

A sinner hung who but at that last hour  
Cried out to be with Him; and was with Him  
In Paradise ere night.

*Cipr.* But was his sin  
As mine enormous?—

*Just.* Shall your hope be less,  
Offering yourself for Christ's sake on that cross  
Which the other only suffer'd for his sin?  
Oh, when we come to perish, side by side,  
Look but for Him between us crucified,  
And call to Him for mercy; and, although  
Scarlet, your sin shall be as white as snow!

*Cipr.* Ev'n as you speak, yourself, though yet  
yourself,  
In that full glory that you saw reveal'd  
With those you love transfigured, and your voice  
As from immeasurable altitude  
Descending, tell me that, my shame and sin  
Quencht in the death that opens wide to you  
The gate, ev'n this great sinner shall pass through,

With Him, with them, with thee!—

(60)

*Just.*

Glory to God!—

Oh, blest assurance on the very verge  
That death is swallow'd up in victory!  
And hark! the step of death is at the door—  
Courage!—Almighty God through Jesus Christ  
Pardon your sins and mine, and as a staff  
Guide and support us through the terrible pass  
That leads us to His rest!—

*Cipr.*

My own beloved!

Whose hand—Oh let it be no sin to say it!—  
Is as the staff that God has put in mine—  
To lead me through the shadow—yet ev'n now—  
Ev'n now—at this last terrible moment—  
Which, to secure my being with thee, thee  
Forbids to stand between my Judge and me,  
And in a few more moments, soul and soul  
May each read other as an open scroll—  
Yet, wilt thou yet believe me not so vile  
To thee, to Him who made thee what thou art,  
Till desperation of the only heart  
I ever sigh'd for, by I knew not then  
How just alienation, drove me down  
To that accursèd thing?

*Just.*

My Cipriano!

Dost thou remember, in the lighter hour—

That when my heart, although you saw it not,  
All the while yearn'd to thee across the gulf  
That yet it dared not pass—my telling thee  
That only Death, which others disunites,  
Should ever make us one? Behold! and now  
The hour is come, and I redeem my vow.

---

(61) (*Here the play may finish: but for any one who would follow Calderon to the end,—Enter FABIO with Guard, who lead away CIPRIANO and JUSTINA. Manent EUSEBIO, JULIAN and Citizens.*)

*Citizen 1.* Alas! alas! alas! So young a pair!  
And one so very wise!

*Cit. 2.* And one so fair!

*Cit. 3.* And both as calmly walking to their death  
As others to a marriage festival.

*Julian.* Looking as calm, at least, Eusebio,  
As when, do you remember, at the last  
Great festival of Zeus, we left him sitting  
Upon the hill-side with his books?

*Eusebio.* I think  
Almost the last we saw of him: so soon,  
Flinging his studies and his scholars by,  
He went away into that solitude  
Which ended in this madness, and now death  
With her he lost his wits for.





*Citizens talking.*

—Before his madness, certainly: but love  
First crazed him, as I told you.

— Well, if mad,  
How guilty?

— Hush! hush! These are dangerous words.

—Be not you bitten by this madness, neighbour.  
Rome's arm is long.

— Aye, and some say her ears.

—Then, ev'n if bitten, bark not—Thunder again!

—And what unnatural darkness!

— Well—a storm—

—They say, you know, he was a sorcerer—

Indeed we saw the mystic dress he wore

All wrought with figures of astrology;

Nay, he confess'd himself as much; and now

May raise a storm to save—

— There was a crash!

—A bolt has fallen somewhere—the walls shake—

—And the ground under—

— Save us, Zeus—

*Voices.*

Away!—

The roof is falling upon us—

(*The wall at the back falls in, and discovers a scaffold  
with CIPRIANO and JUSTINA dead, and LUCIFER  
above them.*)

*Lucifer.*

Stay!—

And hearken to what I am doom'd to tell.

I am the mighty minister of hell

You mis-call heav'n, and of the hellish crew

(63)

Of those false gods you worship for the True;

Who, to revenge *her* treason to the blind

Idolatry that has hoodwinkt mankind,

And *his*, whose halting wisdom, after-knew

What her diviner virtue fore-divined,

By devilish plot and artifices thought

Each of them by the other to have caught;

But, thwarted by superior will, those eyes

That, by my fuel fed, had been a flame

To light them both to darkness down, became

As stars to lead together to the skies,

By such a doom as expiates his sin,

And her pure innocence lets sooner in

To that eternal bliss where, side by side,

They reign at His right hand for whom they died.

While I, convicted in my own despite

Thus to bear witness to the eternal light

Of which I lost, and they have won the crown,

Plunge to my own eternal darkness down.

HÚNDESE.



“SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE  
MADE OF.”





"SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF."

A D R A M A.

TAKEN FROM

CALDERON'S "VIDA ES SUEÑO."

---

For Calderon's Drama sufficient would seem  
The title he chose for it—"Life is a Dream;"  
Two words of the motto now filch'd are enough  
For the impudent mixture they label—"Such stuff!"

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BASILIO, *King of Poland.*

SEGISMUND, *his Son.*

ASTOLFO, *his Nephew.*

ESTRELLA, *his Niece.*

CLOTALDO, *a General in Basilio's Service.*

ROSAURA, *a Muscovite Lady.*

FIFE, *her Attendant.*

*Chamberlain, Lords in Waiting, Officers, Soldiers, &c.,  
in Basilio's Service.*

---

*The Scene of the first and third Acts lies on the Polish  
frontier: of the second Act, in Warsaw.*

“SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE  
MADE OF.”

---

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A pass of rocks, over which a storm is rolling away, and the sun setting: in the foreground, half way down, a fortress. Enter first from the topmost rock ROSAURA, as from horse-back, in man's attire; and, after her FIFE.*<sup>1</sup>

*Rosaura.* THERE, four-footed Fury, blast-  
-engender'd brute, without the wit  
Of brute, or mouth to match the bit  
Of man—art satisfied at last?  
Who, when thunder roll'd aloof,  
Tow'rd the spheres of fire your ears  
Pricking, and the granite kicking  
Into lightning with your hoof,

<sup>1</sup> *As this version of Calderon's drama is not for acting, a higher and wider mountain-scene than practicable may be imagined for Rosaura's descent in the first Act and the soldier's ascent in the last. The bad watch kept by the sentinels who guarded their state-prisoner, together with much else (not all!) that defies sober sense in this wild drama, I must leave Calderon to answer for; whose audience were not critical of detail and probability, so long as a good story, with strong, rapid, and picturesque action and situation, were set before them.*

Among the tempest-shatter'd crags  
Shattering your luckless rider  
Back into the tempest pass'd?  
There then lie to starve and die,  
Or find another Phaeton

(68) Mad-mettled as yourself; for I,  
Wearied, worried, and for-done,  
Alone will down the mountain try,  
That knits his brows against the sun.

*Fife (as to his mule).* There, thou mis-begotten  
thing,

Long-ear'd lightning, tail'd tornado,  
Griffin-hoof-in hurricano,—  
(I might swear till I were almost  
Hoarse with roaring Asonante).  
Who forsooth because your betters  
Would begin to kick and fling—  
You forthwith your noble mind  
Must prove, and kick me off behind,  
Tow'rd the very centre whither  
Gravity was most inclined.

There where you have made your bed  
In it lie; for, wet or dry,  
Let what will for me betide you,  
Burning, blowing, freezing, hailing;  
Famine waste you: devil ride you:

Tempest baste you black and blue:—

(*To Rosaura.*) There! I think in downright railing  
I can hold my own with you.

*Ros.* Ah, my good Fife, whose merry loyal pipe,  
Come weal, come woe, is never out of tune—  
What, you in the same plight too?

*Fife.* Aye;  
And madam—sir—hereby desire,  
When you your own adventures sing  
Another time in lofty rhyme,  
You don't forget the trusty squire  
Who went with you Don-quixoting.

*Ros.* Well, my good fellow—to leave Pegasus,  
Who scarce can serve us than our horses worse—  
They say no one should rob another of  
The single satisfaction he has left  
Of singing his own sorrows; one so great,  
So says some great philosopher, that trouble  
Were worth encount'ring only for the sake  
Of weeping over—what perhaps you know  
Some poet calls the "luxury of woe."

(69)

*Fife.* Had I the poet or philosopher  
In place of her that kick'd me off to ride,  
I 'd test his theory upon his hide.  
But no bones broken, madam—sir, I mean?—

*Ros.* A scratch here that a handkerchief will heal—

And you?—

*Fife.* A scratch in *quiddity*, or kind:  
But not in “*quo*”—my wounds are all behind.  
But, as you say, to stop this strain,  
Which, somehow, once one’s in the vein,  
Comes clattering after—there again!—  
What are we twain—deuce take ’t!—we two,  
I mean, to do—drencht through and through—  
Oh, I shall choke of rhymes, which I believe  
Are all that we shall have to live on here.

*Ros.* What, is our victual gone too?—

*Fife.* Aye, that brute  
Has carried all we had away with her,  
Clothing, and cate, and all.

*Ros.* And now the sun,  
Our only friend and guide, about to sink  
Under the stage of earth.

*Fife.* And enter Night,  
With Capa y Espada—and—pray heav’n—  
With but her lanthorn also.

*Ros.* Ah, I doubt  
To-night, if any, with a dark one—or  
Almost burnt out after a month’s consumption.  
Well! well or ill, on horseback or afoot,  
This is the gate that lets me into Poland;  
And, sorry welcome as she gives a guest



Who writes his own arrival on her rocks  
In his own blood—  
Yet better on her stony threshold die,  
Than live on unrevenged in Muscovy.

*Fife.* Oh what a soul some women have—I mean,  
Some men—

*Ros.* Oh, Fife, Fife, as you love me, Fife, (70)  
Make yourself perfect in that little part,  
Or all will go to ruin!

*Fife.* Oh, I will,  
Please God we find some one to try it on.  
But, truly, would not any one believe  
Some fairy had exchanged us as we lay  
Two tiny foster-children in one cradle?

*Ros.* Well, be that as it may, Fife, it reminds me  
Of what perhaps I should have thought before,  
But better late than never—You know I love you,  
As you, I know, love me, and loyally  
Have follow'd me thus far in my wild venture:  
Well! now then—having seen me safe thus far—  
Safe if not wholly sound—over the rocks  
Into the country where my business lies—  
Why should not you return the way we came,  
The storm all clear'd away, and, leaving me  
(Who now shall want you, though not thank you, less,  
Now that our horses gone) this side the ridge,

Find your way back to dear old home again;  
While I—Come, come!—  
What, weeping, my poor fellow?—

*Fife.* Leave you here  
Alone—my Lady—Lord! I mean my Lord—  
In a strange country—among savages—  
Oh, now I know—you would be rid of me  
For fear my stumbling speech—

*Ros.* Oh, no, no, no!—  
I want you with me for a thousand sakes  
To which that is as nothing—I myself  
More apt to let the secret out myself  
Without your help at all—Come, come, cheer up!  
And if you sing again, “Come weal, come woe,”  
Let it be that; for we will never part  
Until you give the signal.

*Fife.* ’T is a bargain.

*Ros.* Now to begin, then. “Follow, follow me,  
“You fairy elves that be.”

(71) *Fife.* Aye, and go on—  
Something of “following darkness like a dream,”  
For that we ’re after.

*Ros.* No, after the sun;  
Trying to catch hold of his glittering skirts  
That hang upon the mountain as he goes.

*Fife.* Ah, he ’s himself past catching—as you spoke

He heard what you were saying, and—just so—  
Like some scared water-bird,  
As we say in my country, *dōve* below.

*Ros.* Well, we must follow him as best we may.  
Poland is no great country, and, as rich  
In men and means, will but few acres spare  
To lie beneath her barrier mountains bare.  
We cannot, I believe, be very far  
From mankind or their dwellings.

*Fife.* Send it so!  
And well provided for man, woman, and beast.  
No, not for beast. Ah, but my heart begins  
To yearn for her—

*Ros.* Keep close, and keep your feet  
From serving you as hers did.

*Fife.* As for beasts,  
If in default of other entertainment,  
We should provide them with ourselves to eat—  
Bears, lions, wolves—

*Ros.* Oh, never fear.

*Fife.* Or else,  
Default of other beasts, beastlier men,  
Cannibals, Anthropophagi, bare Poles  
Who never knew a tailor but by taste.

*Ros.* Look, look! Unless my fancy misconceive  
With twilight—down among the rocks there, *Fife*—

Some human dwelling, surely—  
Or think you but a rock torn from the rocks  
In some convulsion like to-day's, and perch'd  
Quaintly among them in mock-masonry?

*Fife.* Most likely that, I doubt.

*Ros.* No, no—for look!

(72) A square of darkness opening in it—

*Fife.* Oh,

I don't half like such openings!—

*Ros.* Like the loom

Of night from which she spins her outer gloom—

*Fife.* Lord, madam, pray forbear this tragic vein  
In such a time and place—

*Ros.* And now again

Within that square of darkness, look! a light  
That feels its way with hesitating pulse,  
As we do, through the darkness that it drives  
To blacken into deeper night beyond.

*Fife.* In which could we follow that light's example,  
As might some English Bardolph with his nose,  
We might defy the sunset—Hark, a chain!

*Ros.* And now a lamp, a lamp! And now the hand  
That carries it.

*Fife.* Oh, Lord! that dreadful chain!

*Ros.* And now the bearer of the lamp; indeed  
As strange as any in Arabian tale,

So giant-like, and terrible, and grand,  
Spite of the skin he ’s wrapt in.

*Fife.* Why, ’t is his own:

Oh, ’t is some wild man of the woods; I ’ve heard  
They build and carry torches—

*Ros.* Never Ape

Bore such a brow before the heav’ns as that—  
Chain’d as you say too!—

*Fife.* Oh, that dreadful chain!

*Ros.* And now he sets the lamp down by his side,  
And with one hand clench’d in his tangled hair  
And with a sigh as if his heart would break—

[*During this SEGISMUND has entered from the  
fortress with a torch.*]

*Segismund.* Once more the storm has roar’d itself  
away,

Splitting the crags of God as it retires;  
But sparing still what it should only blast,  
This guilty piece of human handiwork,  
And all that are within it. Oh, how oft,  
How oft, within or here abroad, have I  
Waited, and in the whisper of my heart  
Pray’d for the slanting hand of heav’n to strike  
The blow myself I dared not, out of fear  
Of that Hereafter, worse, they say, than here,  
Plunged headlong in, but, till dismissal waited,

(73)

To wipe at last all sorrow from men's eyes,  
 And make this heavy dispensation clear.  
 Thus have I borne till now, and still endure,  
 Crouching in sullen impotence day by day,  
 Till some such out-burst of the elements  
 Like this rouses the sleeping fire within;  
 And standing thus upon the threshold of  
 Another night about to close the door  
 Upon one wretched day to open it  
 On one yet wretcheder because one more;—  
 Once more, you savage heav'ns, I ask of you—  
 I, looking up to those relentless eyes  
 That, now the greater lamp is gone below,  
 Begin to muster in the listening skies:  
 In all the shining circuits you have gone  
 About this theatre of human woe,  
 What greater sorrow have you gazed upon  
 Than down this narrow chink you witness still;  
 And which, did you yourselves not fore-devise,  
 You register'd for others to fulfil!

*Fife.* This is some Laureate at a birth-day ode;  
 No wonder we went rhyming.

*Ros.* Hush! And now  
 See, starting to his feet, he strides about  
 Far as his tethered steps—





And they that on their treacherous velvet wear  
Figure and constellation like your own,<sup>1</sup>  
With their still living slaughter bound away  
Over the barriers of the mountain cage  
Against which one, blood-guiltless, and endued  
With aspiration and with aptitude  
Transcending other creatures, day by day  
Beats himself mad with unavailing rage!

*Fife.* Why, that must be the meaning of my mule's  
Rebellion—

*Ros.* Hush!

*Seg.* But then if murder be  
The law by which not only conscience-blind  
Creatures, but man too prospers with his kind;  
Who leaving all his guilty fellows free,  
Under your fatal auspice and divine  
Compulsion, leagued in some mysterious ban  
(75) Against one innocent and helpless man,  
Abuse their liberty to murder mine:  
And sworn to silence, like their masters mute  
In heav'n, and like them twirling through the mask  
Of darkness, answering to all I ask,  
Point up to them whose work they execute!

<sup>1</sup> “Some report that they”—(panthers)—“have one marke on the shoulders resembling the moone, growing and decreasing as she doth, sometimes showing a full compasse, and otherwhiles hollowed and pointed with tips like the hornes.”—Philemon Holland's Pliny, b. viii, c. 17.

*Ros.* Ev’n as I thought, some poor unhappy wretch,  
By man wrong’d, wretched, unrevenged, as I!  
Nay, so much worse than I, as by those chains  
Clipt of the means of self-revenge on those  
Who lay on him what they deserve. And I,  
Who taunted Heav’n a little while ago  
With pouring all its wrath upon my head—  
Alas! like him who caught the cast-off husk  
Of what another bragg’d of feeding on,  
Here ’s one that from the refuse of my sorrows  
Could gather all the banquet he desires!  
Poor soul, poor soul!

*Fife.* Speak lower—he will hear you.

*Ros.* And if he should, what then? Why, if he would  
He could not harm me—Nay, and if he could,  
Methinks I ’d venture something of a life  
I care so little for—

*Seg.* Who ’s that? Clotaldo? Who are you, I say,  
That, venturing in these forbidden rocks,  
Have lighted on my miserable life,  
And your own death?

*Ros.* You would not hurt me, surely?

*Seg.* Not I; but those that, iron as the chain  
In which they slay me with a lingering death,  
Will slay you with a sudden—Who are you?

*Ros.* A stranger from across the mountain there,

Who, having lost his way in this strange land  
And coming night, drew hither to what seem'd  
A human dwelling hidden in these rocks,  
And where the voice of human sorrow soon  
Told him it was so.

*Seg.*                      Aye? But nearer—nearer—  
That by this smoky supplement of day  
(76) But for a moment I may see who speaks  
So pitifully sweet.

*Fife.*                      Take care! take care!

*Ros.* Alas, poor man, that I myself so helpless,  
Could better help you than by barren pity,  
And my poor presence—

*Seg.*                      Oh, might that be all!  
But that—a few poor moments—and alas!  
The very bliss of having, and the dread  
Of losing under such a penalty  
As every moment's having runs more near,  
Stifles the very utterance and resource  
They cry for quickest; till from sheer despair  
Of holding thee, methinks myself would tear  
To pieces—

*Fife.*                      There, his word 's enough for it.

*Seg.* Oh, think, if you who move about at will,  
And live in sweet communion with your kind,  
After an hour lost in these lonely rocks

Hunger and thirst after some human voice  
To drink, and human face to feed upon;  
What must one do where all is mute, or harsh,  
And ev'n the naked face of cruelty  
Were better than the mask it works beneath?—  
Across the mountain then! Across the mountain!  
What if the next world which they tell one of  
Be only next across the mountain then,  
Though I must never see it till I die,  
And you one of its angels?

*Ros.*

Alas! Alas!

No angel! And the face you think so fair,  
'T is but the dismal frame-work of these rocks  
That makes it seem so; and the world I come from—  
Alas, alas, too many faces there  
Are but fair visors to black hearts below,  
Or only serve to bring the wearer woe!  
But to yourself—If haply the redress  
That I am here upon may help to yours.  
I heard you tax the heav'ns with ordering,  
And men for executing, what, alas!  
I now behold. But why, and who they are  
Who do, and you who suffer—

(77)

*Seg. (pointing upwards).* Ask of them,  
Whom, as to-night, I have so often asked,  
And ask'd in vain.

*Ros.* But surely, surely—

*Seg.* Hark!

The trumpet of the watch to shut us in.

Oh, should they find you!—Quick! Behind the rocks!

To-morrow—if to-morrow—

*Ros.* (*flinging her sword toward him*). Take my sword!

*ROSAURA and FIFE hide in the rocks; Enter CLOTALDO.*

*Clotaldo.* These stormy days you like to see the last of

Are but ill opiates, Segismund, I think,

For night to follow; and to-night you seem

More than your wont disorder'd. What! a sword?

Within there!

*Enter Soldiers with black visors and torches.*

*Fife.* Here 's a pleasant masquerade!

*Clo.* Whosoever watch this was  
Will have to pay head-reckoning. Meanwhile,  
This weapon had a wearer. Bring him here,  
Alive or dead.

*Seg.* Clotaldo! good Clotaldo!—

*Clo.* (*to Soldiers who enclose SEGISMUND; others searching the rocks*). You know your duty.



*Soldiers (bringing in ROSAURA and FIFE).* Here are  
two of them,

Whoever more to follow—

*Clo.* Who are you,  
That in defiance of known proclamation  
Are found, at night-fall too, about this place?

*Fife.* Oh, my Lord, she—I mean he—

*Ros.* Silence, Fife,  
And let me speak for both.—Two foreign men,  
To whom your country and its proclamations  
Are equally unknown; and had we known, (78)  
Ourselves not masters of our lawless beasts  
That, terrified by the storm among your rocks,  
Flung us upon them to our cost.

*Fife.* My mule—

*Clo.* Foreigners? of what country?

*Ros.* Muscovy.

*Clo.* And whither bound?

*Ros.* Hither—if this be Poland;  
But with no ill design on her, and therefore  
Taking it ill that we should thus be stopt  
Upon her threshold so uncivilly.

*Clo.* Whither in Poland?

*Ros.* To the capital.

*Clo.* And on what errand?

*Ros.* Set me on the road,

And you shall be the nearer to my answer.

*Clo. (aside).* So resolute and ready to reply,  
And yet so young—and—(*aloud*) Well,—  
Your business was not surely with the man  
We found you with?

*Ros.* He was the first we saw,—  
And strangers and benighted, as we were,  
As you too would have done in a like case,  
Accosted him at once.

*Clo.* Aye, but this sword?

*Ros.* I flung it toward him.

*Clo.* Well, and why?

*Ros.* And why?  
But to revenge himself on those who thus  
Injuriously misuse him.

*Clo.* So—so—so!  
'T is well such resolution wants a beard—  
And, I suppose, is never to attain one.  
Well, I must take you both, you and your sword,  
Prisoners.

*Fife (offering a cudgel).* Pray take mine, and  
welcome, sir;  
I 'm sure I gave it to that mule of mine  
To mighty little purpose.

(79) *Ros.* Mine you have;  
And may it win us some more kindness

Than we have met with yet.

*Clo. (examining the sword).* More mystery!  
How came you by this weapon?

*Ros.* From my father.

*Clo.* And do you know whence he?

*Ros.* Oh, very well:  
From one of this same Polish realm of yours,  
Who promised a return should come the chance,  
Of courtesies that he received himself  
In Muscovy, and left this pledge of it—  
Not likely yet, it seems, to be redeem'd.

*Clo. (aside).* Oh, wondrous chance—or wondrous Providence!

The sword that I myself in Muscovy,  
When these white hairs were black, for keepsake left  
Of obligation for a like return  
To him who saved me wounded as I lay  
Fighting against his country; took me home;  
Tended me like a brother till recover'd,  
Perchance to fight against him once again—  
And now my sword put back into my hand  
By his—if not his son—still, as so seeming,  
By me, as first devoir of gratitude,  
To seem believing, till the wearer's self  
See fit to drop the ill-dissembling mask.  
(*Aloud*). Well, a strange turn of fortune has arrested

The sharp and sudden penalty that else  
 Had visited your rashness or mischance:  
 In part, your tender youth too—pardon me,  
 And touch not where your sword is not to answer—  
 Commends you to my care; not your life only,  
 Else by this misadventure forfeited;  
 But ev’n your errand, which by happy chance,  
 Chimes with the very business I am on,  
 And calls me to the very point you aim at.

*Ros.* The capital?

*Clo.* Aye, the capital; and ev’n

(80) That capital of capitals, the Court:

Where you may plead, and I may promise, win  
 Pardon for this, you say unwilling, trespass,  
 And prosecute what else you have at heart,  
 With me to help you forward all I can;  
 Provided all in loyalty to those  
 To whom by natural allegiance  
 I first am bound to.

*Ros.* As you make, I take

Your offer: with like promise on my side  
 Of loyalty to you and those you serve,  
 Under like reservation for regards  
 Nearer and dearer still.

*Clo.* Enough, enough;

Your hand; a bargain on both sides. Meanwhile,

Here shall you rest to-night. The break of day  
Shall see us both together on the way.

*Ros.* Thus then what I for misadventure blamed,  
Directly draws me where my wishes aim'd. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Palace at Warsaw. Enter on one side*  
*ASTOLFO, Duke of Muscovy, with his train: and, on*  
*the other, the PRINCESS ESTRELLA, with hers.*

*Astolfo.* My royal cousin, if so near in blood,  
Till this auspicious meeting scarcely known,  
Till all that beauty promised in the bud  
Is now to its consummate blossom blown,  
Well met at last; and may—

*Estrella.* Enough, my Lord,  
Of compliment devised for you by some  
Court tailor, and, believe me, still too short  
To cover the designful heart below.

*Ast.* Nay, but indeed, fair cousin—

*Est.* Aye, let Deed  
Measure your words, indeed your flowers of speech  
Ill with your iron equipage atone;  
Irony indeed, and wordy compliment.

*Ast.* Indeed, indeed, you wrong me, royal cousin,  
And fair as royal, misinterpreting  
What, even for the end you think I aim at,  
If false to you, were fatal to myself.

*Est.* Why, what else means the glittering steel, my  
Lord,

That bristles in the rear of these fine words?  
What can it mean, but, failing to cajole,  
To fight or force me from my just pretension?

*Ast.* Nay, might I not ask ev’n the same of you,  
The nodding helmets of whose men at arms  
Out-crest the plumage of your lady court?

*Est.* But to defend what yours would force from me.

*Ast.* Might not I, lady, say the same of mine?  
But not to come to battle, ev’n of words,  
With a fair lady, and my kinswoman;  
And as averse to stand before your face,  
Defenceless, and condemn’d in your disgrace,  
Till the good king be here to clear it all—  
Will you vouchsafe to hear me?

*Est.* As you will.

*Ast.* You know that, when about to leave this world,  
Our royal grandsire, King Alfonso, left  
Three children; one a son, Basilio,  
Who wears—long may he wear!—the crown of Poland;  
And daughters twain: of whom the elder was  
Your mother, Clorileña, now some while  
Exalted to a more than mortal throne;  
And Recisunda, mine, the younger sister,  
Who, married to the Prince of Muscovy,



Gave me the light which may she live to see  
Herself for many, many years to come.  
Meanwhile, good King Basilio, as you know,  
Deep in abstruser studies than this world,  
And busier with the stars than lady's eyes,  
Has never by a second marriage yet  
Replaced, as Poland ask'd of him, the heir  
An early marriage brought and took away;  
His young queen dying with the son she bore him:  
And in such alienation grown so old  
As leaves no other hope of heir to Poland  
Than his two sisters' children; you, fair cousin,  
And me; for whom the Commons of the realm  
Divide themselves into two several factions;  
Whether for you, the elder sister's child;  
Or me, born of the younger, but, they say,  
My natural prerogative of man  
Outweighing your priority of birth.  
Which discord growing loud and dangerous,  
Our uncle, King Basilio, doubly sage  
In prophesying and providing for  
The future, as to deal with it when come,  
Bids us here meet to-day in solemn council  
Our several pretensions to compose.  
And, but the martial out-burst that proclaims  
His coming, makes all further parley vain,

(82)

Unless my bosom, by which only wise  
I prophesy, now wrongly prophesies,  
By such a happy compact as I dare  
But glance at till the Royal Sage declare.

(*Trumpets, &c. Enter KING BASILIO with his Council.*)

*All.* The King! God save the King!

*Estrella* } (*kneeling*). Oh, Royal Sir!—

*Astolfo* } God save your Majesty!—

*King.* Rise, both of you,

Rise to my arms, Astolfo and Estrella;  
As my two sisters' children always mine,  
Now more than ever, since myself and Poland  
Solely to you for our succession look'd.

And now give ear, you and your several factions,  
And you, the Peers and Princes of this realm,  
While I reveal the purport of this meeting  
In words whose necessary length I trust  
No unsuccessful issue shall excuse.

You and the world who have surnamed me “Sage”  
Know that I owe that title, if my due,  
To my long meditation on the book  
Which ever lying open overhead—  
The book of heav'n, I mean—so few have read;

(83) Whose golden letters on whose sapphire leaf,  
Distinguishing the page of day and night,

And all the revolution of the year;  
So with the turning volume where they lie  
Still changing their prophetic syllables,  
They register the destinies of men:  
Until with eyes that, dim with years indeed,  
Are quicker to pursue the stars that rule them,  
I get the start of Time, and from his hand  
The wand of tardy revelation draw.  
Oh, had the self-same heav'n upon his page  
Inscribed my death ere I should read my life,  
And, by forecasting of my own mischance,  
Play not the victim but the suicide  
In my own tragedy!—But you shall hear.  
You know how once, as kings must for their people,  
And only once, as wise men for themselves,  
I woo'd and wedded: know too that my Queen  
In childing died; but not, as you believe,  
With her, the son she died in giving life to.  
For, as the hour of birth was on the stroke,  
Her brain conceiving with her womb, she dream'd  
A serpent tore her entrail. And, too surely  
(For evil omen seldom speaks in vain)  
The man-child breaking from that living tomb  
That makes our birth the antitype of death,  
Man-grateful, for the life she gave him paid  
By killing her: and with such circumstance

As suited such unnatural tragedy;  
 He coming into light, if light it were  
 That darken'd at his very horoscope,  
 When heaven's two champions—sun and moon I  
 mean—

Suffused in blood upon each other fell  
 In such a raging duel of eclipse  
 As hath not terrified the universe  
 Since that that wept in blood the death of Christ:  
 When the dead walk'd, the waters turn'd to blood,  
 Earth and her cities totter'd, and the world  
 Seem'd shaken to its last paralysis.

(84) In such a paroxysm of dissolution  
 That son of mine was born; by that first act  
 Heading the monstrous catalogue of crime,  
 I found fore-written in his horoscope;  
 As great a monster in man's history  
 As was in nature his nativity;  
 So savage, bloody, terrible, and impious,  
 Who, should he live, would tear his country's entrails,  
 As by his birth his mother's; with which crime  
 Beginning, he should clench the dreadful tale  
 By trampling on his father's silver head.  
 All which fore-reading, and his act of birth  
 Fate's warrant that I read his life aright;  
 To save his country from his mother's fate,

I gave abroad that he had died with her  
His being slew: with midnight secrecy  
I had him carried to a lonely tower  
Hewn from the mountain-barriers of the realm,  
And under strict anathema of death  
Guarded from men's inquisitive approach,  
Save from the trusty few one needs must trust;  
Who while his fasten'd body they provide  
With salutary garb and nourishment,  
Instruct his soul in what no soul may miss  
Of holy faith, and in such other lore  
As may solace his life-imprisonment,  
And tame perhaps the Savage prophesied  
Toward such a trial as I aim at now,  
And now demand your special hearing to.  
What in this fearful business I have done,  
Judge whether lightly or maliciously,—  
I, with my own and only flesh and blood,  
And proper lineal inheritor!  
I swear, had his foretold atrocities  
Touch'd me alone, I had not saved myself  
At such a cost to him; but as a king,—  
A Christian king,—I say, advisedly,  
Who would devote his people to a tyrant  
Worse than Caligula fore-chronicled?  
But even this not without grave mis-giving,



Lest by some chance mis-reading of the stars,  
 Or mis-direction of what rightly read,  
 I wrong my son of his prerogative,  
 And Poland of her rightful sovereign.  
 For, sure and certain prophets as the stars,  
 Although they err not, he who reads them may;  
 Or rightly reading—seeing there is One  
 Who governs them, as, under Him, they us,  
 We are not sure if the rough diagram  
 They draw in heav’n and we interpret here,  
 Be sure of operation, if the Will  
 Supreme, that sometimes for some special end  
 The course of providential nature breaks  
 By miracle, may not of these same stars  
 Cancel his own first draft, or overrule  
 What else fore-written all else overrules.  
 As, for example, should the Will Almighty  
 Permit the Free-will of particular man  
 To break the meshes of else strangling fate—  
 Which Free-will, fearful of foretold abuse,  
 I have myself from my own son for-closed  
 From ever possible self-extrication;  
 A terrible responsibility,  
 Not to the conscience to be reconciled  
 Unless opposing almost certain evil  
 Against so slight contingency of good.



Well—thus perplexed, I have resolved at last  
To bring the thing to trial: whereunto  
Here have I summon'd you, my Peers, and you  
Whom I more dearly look to, failing him,  
As witnesses to that which I propose;  
And thus propose the doing it. Clotaldo,  
Who guards my son with old fidelity,  
Shall bring him hither from his tower by night,  
Lockt in a sleep so fast as by my art  
I rivet to within a link of death,  
But yet from death so far, that next day's dawn  
Shall wake him up upon the royal bed,  
Complete in consciousness and faculty,  
When with all princely pomp and retinue  
My loyal Peers with due obeisance  
Shall hail him Segismund, the Prince of Poland.  
Then if with any show of human kindness  
He fling discredit, not upon the stars,  
But upon me, their misinterpreter;  
With all apology mistaken age  
Can make to youth it never meant to harm,  
To my son's forehead will I shift the crown  
I long have wish'd upon a younger brow;  
And in religious humiliation,  
For what of worn-out age remains to me,  
Entreat my pardon both of Heav'n and him

(86)

For tempting destinies beyond my reach.  
 But if, as I misdoubt, at his first step  
 The hoof of the predicted savage shows;  
 Before predicted mischief can be done,  
 The self-same sleep that loosed him from the chain  
 Shall re-consign him, not to loose again.  
 Then shall I, having lost that heir direct,  
 Look solely to my sisters' children twain;  
 Each of a claim so equal as divides  
 The voice of Poland to their several sides,  
 But, as I trust, to be entwined ere long  
 Into one single wreath so fair and strong  
 As shall at once all difference atone,  
 And cease the realm's division with their own.  
 Cousins and Princes, Peers and Councillors,  
 Such is the purport of this invitation,  
 And such is my design. Whose furtherance  
 If not as Sovereign, if not as Seer,  
 Yet one whom these white locks, if nothing else,  
 To patient acquiescence consecrate,  
 I now demand and even supplicate.

*Ast.* Such news, and from such lips, may well  
 suspend

The tongue to loyal answer most attuned;  
 But if to me as spokesman of my faction  
 Your Highness looks for answer; I reply

For one and all—Let Segismund, whom now  
We first hear tell of as your living heir,  
Appear, and but in your sufficient eye  
Approve himself worthy to be your son,  
Then we will hail him Poland's rightful heir.  
What says my cousin?

*Est.* Aye, with all my heart.

But if my youth and sex upbraid me not  
That I should dare ask of so wise a king—

*King.* Ask, ask, fair cousin! Nothing, I am sure,  
Not well consider'd; nay, if 't were, yet nothing  
But pardonable from such lips as those.

*Est.* Then, with your pardon, Sir—If Segismund,  
My cousin, whom I shall rejoice to hail  
As Prince of Poland too, as you propose,  
Be to a trial coming upon which  
More, as I think, than life itself depends,  
Why, Sir, with sleep disorder'd senses brought  
To this uncertain contest with his stars?

*King.* Well askt indeed! As wisely be it answer'd!—  
*Because* it is uncertain, see you not?  
Far as I think I can discern between  
The sudden flaws of a sleep-startled man,  
And of the savage thing we have to dread;  
If but bewilder'd, dazzled, and uncouth,  
As might the sanest and the civilest

In circumstance so strange—nay, more than that,  
 If moved to any out-break short of blood,  
 All shall be well with him; and how much more,  
 If 'mid the magic turmoil of the change,  
 He shall so calm a resolution show  
 As scarce to reel beneath so great a blow!  
 But if with savage passion uncontroll'd  
 He lay about him like the brute foretold,  
 And must as suddenly be caged again;  
 Then what redoubled anguish and despair,  
 From that brief flash of blissful liberty  
 Remitted—and for ever—to his chain!  
 Which so much less, if on the stage of glory

(88) Enter'd and excited through such a door  
 Of sleep as makes a dream of all between.

*Est.* Oh kindly answer, Sir, to question that  
 To charitable courtesy less wise  
 Might call for pardon rather! I shall now  
 Gladly, what, uninstructed, loyally  
 I should have waited.

*Ast.* Your Highness doubts not me,  
 Nor how my heart follows my cousin's lips,  
 Whatever way the doubtful balance fall,  
 Still loyal to your bidding.

*Omnes.* So say all.

*King.* I hoped, and did expect, of all no less—

And sure no sovereign never needed more  
From all who owe him love or loyalty.  
For what a strait of time I stand upon,  
When to this issue not alone I bring  
My son your Prince, but ev’n myself your King:  
And, whichsoever way for him it turn,  
Of less than little honour to myself.  
For if this coming trial justify  
My thus withholding from my son his right,  
Is not the judge himself justified in  
The father’s shame? And if the judge proved wrong,  
My son withholding from his right thus long,  
Shame and remorse to judge and father both:  
Unless remorse and shame together drown’d  
In having what I flung for worthless found.  
But come—already weary with your travel,  
And ill refresht by this strange history,  
Until the hours that draw the sun from heav’n  
Unite us at the customary board,  
Each to his several chamber: you to rest;  
I to contrive with old Clotaldo best  
The method of a stranger thing than old  
Time has yet among the records told. [*Exeunt.*

(89)

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Throne room in the Palace. Music within.*

*Enter KING and CLOTALDO, meeting a Lord in waiting.*

*King.* You for a moment beckon'd from your office,  
Tell me thus far how goes it. In due time  
The potion left him?

*Lord.* At the very hour  
To which your Highness temper'd it. Yet not  
So wholly but some lingering mist still hung  
About his dawning sense—which to clear,  
We fill'd and handed him a morning drink  
With sleep's specific antidote suffused;  
And while with princely raiment we invested  
What nature surely modell'd for a Prince—  
All but the sword—as you directed—

*King.* Aye—

*Lord.* If not too loudly, yet emphatically  
Still with the title of a Prince address'd him.

*King.* How bore he that?

*Lord.* With all the rest, my liege,  
I will not say so like one in a dream  
As one himself misdoubting that he dream'd.

*King.* So far so well, Clotaldo, either way,



And best of all if tow'rd the worse I dread,  
But yet no violence?—

*Lord.* At most, impatience;  
Wearied perhaps with importunities  
We yet were bound to offer.

*King.* Oh, Clotaldo!

Though thus far well, yet would myself had drunk  
The potion he revives from! Such suspense  
Crowds all the pulses of life's residue  
Into the present moment; and I think,  
Whichever way the trembling scale may turn,  
Will leave the crown of Poland for some one  
To wait no longer than the setting sun!

*Clo.* Courage, my liege! The curtain is undrawn, (90)  
And each must play his part out manfully,  
Leaving the rest to heav'n.

King. Whose written words  
If I should misinterpret or transgress!  
But as you say—  
(*To the Lord, who exit.*) You, back to him at once;  
Clotaldo, you, when he is somewhat used  
To the new world of which they call him Prince,  
Where place and face, and all is strange to him,  
With your known features and familiar garb  
Shall then, as chorus to the scene, accost him,  
And by such earnest of that old and too

Familiar world, assure him of the new.  
 Last in the strange procession, I myself  
 Will by one full and last development  
 Complete the plot for that catastrophe  
 That he must put to all; God grant it be  
 The crown of Poland on his brows!—Hark! hark!—  
 Was that his voice within?—Now louder—Oh,  
 Clotaldo, what! So soon begun to roar!—  
 Again! above the music—But betide  
 What may, until the moment, we must hide.

[*Exeunt* KING and CLOTALDO.

*Segismund (within).* Forbear! I stifle with your  
 perfume! cease

Your crazy salutations! peace, I say—  
 Begone or let me go, ere I go mad  
 With all this babble, mummary, and glare,  
 For I am growing dangerous—Air! room! air!—

[*He rushes in. Music ceases.*

Oh but to save the reeling brain from wreck  
 With its bewilder'd senses!—

[*He covers his eyes for a while.*

What! Ev'n now  
 That Babel left behind me, but my eyes  
 Pursued by the same glamour, that—unless  
 Alike bewitch'd too—the confederate sense  
 Vouches for palpable: bright-shining floors

That ring hard answer back to the stamp'd heel,  
And shoot up airy columns marble-cold,  
That, as they climb, break into golden leaf  
And capital, till they embrace aloft  
In clustering flower and fruitage over walls  
Hung with such purple curtain as the West  
Fringes with such a gold; or over-laid  
With sanguine-glowing semblances of men,  
Each in his all but living action busied,  
Or from the wall they look from, with fix'd eyes  
Pursuing me; and one most strange of all  
That, as I pass'd the crystal on the wall,  
Look'd from it—left it—and as I return,  
Returns, and looks me face to face again—  
Unless some false reflection of my brain,  
The outward semblance of myself—Myself?  
How know that tawdry shadow for myself,  
But that it moves as I move; lifts his hand  
With mine; each motion echoing so close  
The immediate suggestion of the will  
In which myself I recognize—Myself!—  
What, this fantastic Segismund the same  
Who last night, as for all his nights before,  
Lay down to sleep in wolf-skin on the ground  
In a black turret which the wolf howl'd round,  
And woke again upon a golden bed,

Round which as clouds about a rising sun,  
 In scarce less glittering caparison,  
 Gather'd gay shapes that, underneath a breeze  
 Of music, handed him upon their knees  
 The wine of heaven in a cup of gold,  
 And still in soft melodious under-song  
 Hailing me Prince of Poland!—“Segismund,”  
 They said, “Our Prince! The Prince of Poland!”  
 and

Again, “Oh, welcome, welcome, to his own,  
 “Our own Prince Segismund—”

Oh, but a blast—

One blast of the rough mountain air! one look  
 At the grim features— (*He goes to the window*)

(92) What they disvisor'd also! shatter'd chaos  
 Cast into stately shape and masonry,  
 Between whose channel'd and perspective sides  
 Compact with rooted towers, and flourishing  
 To heav'n with gilded pinnacle and spire,  
 Flows the live current ever to and fro  
 With open aspect and free step!—Clotaldo!  
 Clotaldo!—calling as one scarce dares call  
 For him who suddenly might break the spell  
 One fears to walk without him—Why, that I,  
 With unencumber'd step as any there,

Go stumbling through my glory—feeling for  
That iron leading-string—aye, for myself—  
For that fast-anchored self of yesterday,  
Of yesterday, and all my life before,  
Ere drifted clean from self-identity  
Upon the fluctuation of to-day’s  
Mad whirling circumstance!—And fool, why not?  
If reason, sense, and self-identity  
Obliterated from a worn-out brain,  
Art thou not maddest striving to be sane,  
And catching at that Self of yesterday  
That, like a leper’s rags, best flung away!  
Or if not mad, then dreaming—dreaming?—well—  
Dreaming then—Or, if self to self be true,  
Not mock’d by that, but as poor souls have been  
By those who wrong’d them, to give wrong new relish?  
Or have those stars indeed they told me of  
As masters of my wretched life of old,  
Into some happier constellation roll’d,  
And brought my better fortune out on earth  
Clear as themselves in heav’n!—Prince Segismund  
They call’d me—and at will I shook them off—  
Will they return again at my command  
Again to call me so?—Within there! You!  
Segismund calls—Prince Segismund—



(*He has seated himself on the throne. Enter CHAMBER-  
LAIN, with lords in waiting.*)

(93) *Chamb.* I rejoice

That unadvised of any but the voice  
Of royal instinct in the blood, your Highness  
Has ta'en the chair that you were born to fill.

*Seg.* The chair?

*Chamb.* The royal throne of Poland, Sir,  
Which may your Royal Highness keep as long  
As he that now rules from it shall have ruled  
When heav'n has call'd him to itself.

*Seg.* When he?—

*Chamb.* Your royal father, King Basilio, Sir.

*Seg.* My royal father—King Basilio.  
You see I answer but as Echo does,  
Not knowing what she listens or repeats.  
This is my throne—this is my palace—Oh,  
But this out of the window?—

*Chamb.* Warsaw, Sir,  
Your capital—

*Seg.* And all the moving people?

*Chamb.* Your subjects and your vassals like our-  
selves.

*Seg.* Aye, aye—my subjects—in my capital—  
Warsaw—and I am Prince of it—You see



It needs much iteration to strike sense  
Into the human echo.

*Chamb.*                      Left awhile  
In the quick brain, the word will quickly to  
Full meaning blow.

*Seg.*                      You think so?

*Chamb.*                                      And meanwhile  
Lest our obsequiousness, which means no worse  
Than customary honour to the Prince  
We most rejoice to welcome, trouble you,  
Should we retire again? or stand apart?  
Or would your Highness have the music play  
Again, which meditation, as they say,  
So often loves to float upon?

*Seg.*                      The music?  
No—yes—perhaps the trumpet— (*Aside.*) Yet if that  
Brought back the troop!

*A Lord.*                      The trumpet! There again (94)  
How trumpet-like spoke out the blood of Poland!

*Chamb.* Before the morning is far up, your High-  
ness  
Will have the trumpet marshalling your soldiers  
Under the Palace windows.

*Seg.*                      Ah, my soldiers—  
My soldiers—not black-visor’d?—

*Chamb.*                      Sir?

*Seg.*

No matter.

But—one thing—for a moment—in your ear—  
Do you know one Clotaldo?

*Chamb.*

Oh, my Lord,

He and myself together, I may say,  
Although in different vocations,  
Have silver'd in your royal father's service;  
And, as I trust, with both of us a few  
White hairs to fall in yours.

*Seg.*

Well said, well said!

Basilio, my father—well—Clotaldo—  
Is he my kinsman too?

*Chamb.*

Oh, my good Lord,

A General simply in your Highness' service,  
Than whom your Highness has no trustier.

*Seg.*

Aye, so you said before, I think. And you  
With that white wand of yours—  
Why, now I think on 't, I have read of such  
A silver-hair'd magician with a wand,  
Who in a moment, with a wave of it,  
Turn'd rags to jewels, clowns to emperors,  
By some benigner magic than the stars  
Spirited poor good people out of hand  
From all their woes; in some enchanted sleep  
Carried them off on cloud or dragon-back  
Over the mountains, over the wide Deep,

And set them down to wake in Fairyland.

*Chamb.* Oh, my good Lord, you laugh at me—  
and I

Right glad to make you laugh at such a price:

You know me no enchanter: if I were,

I and my wand as much your Highness',

As now your chamberlain—

(95)

*Seg.* My chamberlain?—

And these that follow you?—

*Chamb.* On you, my Lord;

Your Highness' lords in waiting.

*Seg.* Lords in waiting.

Well, I have now learn'd to repeat, I think,

If only but by rote—This is my palace,

And this my throne—which unadvised—And that

Out of the window there my Capital;

And all the people moving up and down

My subjects and my vassals like yourselves,

My chamberlain—and lords in waiting—and

Clotaldo—and Clotaldo?—

You are an aged, and seem a reverend man—

You do not—though his fellow-officer—

You do not mean to mock me?

*Chamb.* Oh, my Lord!

*Seg.* Well then—If no magician, as you say,

Yet setting me a riddle, that my brain,

With all its senses whirling, cannot solve,  
 Yourself or one of these with you must answer—  
 How I—that only last night fell asleep  
 Not knowing that the very soil of earth  
 I lay down—chain’d—to sleep upon was Poland—  
 Awake to find myself the Lord of it,  
 With Lords, and Generals, and Chamberlains,  
 And ev’n my very Gaoler, for my vassals!

*Enter suddenly* CLOTALDO.

*Clotaldo.* Stand all aside  
 That I may put into his hand the clue  
 To lead him out of this amazement. Sir,  
 Vouchsafe your Highness from my bended knee  
 Receive my homage first.

*Seg.* Clotaldo! What,  
 At last—his old self—undisguised where all  
 Is masquerade—to end it!—You kneeling too!  
 What! have the stars you told me long ago  
 96) Laid that old work upon you, added this,  
 That, having chain’d your prisoner so long,  
 You loose his body now to slay his wits,  
 Dragging him—how I know not—whither scarce  
 I understand—dressing him up in all  
 This frippery, with your dumb familiars  
 Disvisor’d, and their lips unlockt to lie,

Calling him Prince and King, and madman-like,  
Setting a crown of straw upon his head!

*Clo.* Would but your Highness, as indeed I now  
Must call you—and upon his bended knee  
Never bent Subject more devotedly—  
However all about you, and perhaps  
You to yourself incomprehensible,  
But rest in the assurance of your own  
Sane waking senses, by these witnesses  
Attested, till the story of it all,  
Of which I bring a chapter, be reveal'd,  
Assured of all you see and hear as neither  
Madness nor mockery—

*Seg.* What then?

*Clo.* All it seems:

This palace with its royal garniture;  
This capital of which it is the eye,  
With all its temples, marts, and arsenals;  
This realm of which this city is the head,  
With all its cities, villages, and tilth,  
Its armies, fleets, and commerce; all your own;  
And all the living souls that make them up,  
From those who now, and those who shall, salute you,  
Down to the poorest peasant of the realm,  
Your subjects—Who, though now their mighty voice  
Sleeps in the general body unapprized,

Wait but a word from those about you now  
To hail you Prince of Poland, Segismund.

*Seg.* All this is so?

*Clo.* As sure as anything  
Is or can be.

*Seg.* You swear it on the faith  
(97) You taught me—elsewhere?—

*Clo.* (*kissing the hilt of his sword*)—Swear it upon  
this  
Symbol, and champion of the holy faith  
I wear it to defend.

*Seg.* (*to himself*). My eyes have not deceived me,  
nor my ears,  
With this transfiguration, nor the strain  
Of royal welcome that arose and blew,  
Breathed from no lying lips, along with it.  
For here Clotaldo comes, his own old self,  
Who, if not Lie and phantom with the rest—  
(*Aloud*) Well then, all this is thus.  
For have not these fine people told me so,  
And you, Clotaldo, sworn it? And the Why  
And Wherefore are to follow by and bye!  
And yet—and yet—why wait for that which you  
Who take your oath on it can answer—and  
Indeed it presses hard upon my brain—  
What I was asking of these gentlemen



When you came in upon us; how it is  
That I—the Segismund you know so long—  
No longer than the sun that rose to-day  
Rose—and from what you know—  
Rose to be Prince of Poland?

*Clo.* So to be  
Acknowledg'd and entreated, sir.

*Seg.* So be  
Acknowledg'd and entreated—  
Well—But if now by all, by some at least  
So known—if not entreated—heretofore—  
Though not by you—For, now I think again,  
Of what should be your attestation worth,  
You that of all my questionable subjects  
Who knowing what, yet left me where, I was,  
You least of all, Clotaldo, till the dawn  
Of this first day that told it to myself?

*Clo.* Oh, let your Highness draw the line across  
Fore-written sorrow, and in this new dawn  
Bury that long sad night.

*Seg.* Not ev'n the Dead, (98)  
Call'd to the resurrection of the blest,  
Shall so directly drop all memory  
Of woes and wrongs foregone!

*Clo.* But not resent—  
Purged by the trial of that sorrow past

For full fruition of their present bliss.

*Seg.* But leaving with the Judge what, till this earth  
Be cancell'd in the burning heav'ns, He leaves  
His earthly delegates to execute,  
Of retribution in reward to them  
And woe to those who wrong'd them—Not as you,  
Not you, Clotaldo, knowing not—And yet  
Ev'n to the guiltiest wretch in all the realm,  
Of any treason guilty short of that,  
Stern usage—but assuredly not knowing,  
Not knowing 't was your sovereign lord, Clotaldo,  
You used so sternly.

*Clo.* Aye, sir; with the same  
Devotion and fidelity that now  
Does homage to him for my sovereign.

*Seg.* Fidelity that held his Prince in chains!

*Clo.* Fidelity more fast than had it loosed him—

*Seg.* Ev'n from the very dawn of consciousness  
Down at the bottom of the barren rocks,  
Where scarce a ray of sunshine found him out,  
In which the poorest beggar of my realm  
At least to human-full proportion grows—  
Me! Me—whose station was the kingdom's top  
To flourish in, reaching my head to heav'n,  
And with my branches overshadowing  
The meaner growth below!

*Clo.* Still with the same  
Fidelity—

*Seg.* To me!—

*Clo.* Aye, sir, to you,  
Through that divine allegiance upon which  
All Order and Authority is based;  
Which to revolt against—

*Seg.* Were to revolt (99)  
Against the stars, belike!

*Clo.* And him who reads them;  
And by that right, and by the sovereignty  
He wears as you shall wear it after him;  
Aye, one to whom yourself—  
Yourself, ev'n more than any subject here,  
Are bound by yet another and more strong  
Allegiance—King Basilio—your Father!—

*Seg.* Basilio—King—my father!—

*Clo.* Oh, my Lord,  
Let me beseech you on my bended knee,  
For your own sake—for Poland's—and for his,  
Who, looking up for counsel to the skies,  
Did what he did under authority  
To which the kings of earth themselves are subject,  
And whose behest not only he that suffers,  
But he that executes, not comprehends,  
But only He that orders it—

*Seg.*

The King—

My father!—Either I am mad already,  
Or that way driving fast—or I should know  
That fathers do not use their children so,  
Or men were loosed from all allegiance  
To fathers, kings, and heav’n that order’d all.  
But, mad or not, my hour is come, and I  
Will have my reckoning—Either you lie,  
Under the skirt of sinless majesty  
Shrouding your treason; or if *that* indeed,  
Guilty itself, take refuge in the stars  
That cannot hear the charge, or disavow—  
You, whether doer or deviser, who  
Come first to hand, shall pay the penalty  
By the same hand you owe it to—

*(Seizing CLOTALDO’s sword and about to strike him.)*

*Enter ROSAURA suddenly.*

*Rosaura.* Fie, my lord—forbear,

(100) What! a young hand rais’d against silver hair!—

*(She retreats through the crowd.)*

*Seg.* Stay! stay!—What come and vanisht as  
before—

I scarce remember how—but—

*Voices within.* Room for Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy!

*Enter ASTOLFO.*

*Astolfo.* Welcome, thrice welcome, the auspicious  
day,

When from the mountain where he darkling lay,  
The Polish sun into the firmament  
Sprung all the brighter for his late ascent,  
And in meridian glory—

*Seg.* Where is he?

Why must I ask this twice?—

*A Lord.* The Page, my Lord?

I wonder at his boldness—

*Seg.* But I tell you

He came with Angel written in his face  
As now it is, when all was black as hell  
About, and none of you who now—he came,  
And Angel-like flung me a shining sword  
To cut my way through darkness; and again  
Angel-like wrests it from me in behalf  
Of one—whom I will spare for sparing him:  
But he must come and plead with that same voice  
That pray'd for me—in vain.

*Chamb.* He is gone for,

And shall attend your pleasure, sir. Meanwhile,  
Will not your Highness, as in courtesy,  
Return your royal cousin's greeting?

*Seg.* Whose?

*Chamb.* Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy, my Lord,  
Saluted, and with gallant compliment  
Welcomed you to your royal title.

*Seg.* (*to ASTOLFO*). Oh—  
You knew of this then?

(101) *Ast.* Knew of what, my Lord?

*Seg.* That I was Prince of Poland all the while,  
And you my subject?

*Ast.* Pardon me, my Lord;  
But some few hours ago myself I learn'd  
Your dignity; but, knowing it, no more  
Than when I knew it not, your subject.

*Seg.* What then?

*Ast.* Your Highness' chamberlain ev'n now has told  
you;

Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy,  
Your father's sister's son; your cousin, sir:  
And who as such, and in his own right Prince,  
Expects from you the courtesy he shows.

*Chamb.* His Highness is as yet unused to Court,  
And to the ceremonious interchange  
Of compliment, especially to those  
Who draw their blood from the same royal fountain.

*Seg.* Where is the lad? I weary of all this—  
Prince, cousins, chamberlains, and compliments—



Where are my soldiers? Blow the trumpet, and  
With one sharp blast scatter these butterflies,  
And bring the men of iron to my side,  
With whom a king feels like a king indeed!

*Voices within.* Within there! room for the Princess  
Estrella!

*Enter ESTRELLA with Ladies.*

*Estrella.* Welcome, my Lord, right welcome to the  
throne

That much too long has waited for your coming:  
And, in the general voice of Poland, hear  
A kinswoman and cousin's no less sincere.

*Seg.* Aye, this is welcome, welcome-worth indeed,  
And cousin cousin-worth! Oh, I have thus  
Over the threshold of the mountain seen,  
Leading a bevy of fair stars, the moon  
Enter the court of heav'n—My kinswoman!  
My cousin! But my subject?—

*Est.* If you please  
To count your cousin for your subject, sir,  
You shall not find her a disloyal.

*Seg.* Oh,  
But there are twin stars in that heav'nly face,  
That now I know for having over-ruled  
Those evil ones that darken'd all my past,

(102)

And brought me forth from that captivity  
To be the slave of her who set me free.

*Est.* Indeed, my Lord, these eyes have no such  
power

Over the past or present: but perhaps  
They brighten at your welcome to supply  
The little that a lady's speech commends;  
And in the hope that, let whichever be  
The other's subject, we may both be friends.

*Seg.* Your hand to that—But why does this warm  
hand  
Shoot a cold shudder through me?

*Est.* In revenge  
For likening me to that cold moon, perhaps.

*Seg.* Oh, but the lip whose music tells me so  
Breathes of a warmer planet, and that lip  
Shall remedy the treason of the hand!

*(He catches to embrace her.)*

*Est.* Release me, sir!

*Chamb.* And pardon me, my Lord,  
This lady is a Princess absolute,  
As Prince he is who just saluted you,  
And claims her by affiance.

*Seg.* Hence, old fool,  
For ever thrusting that white stick of yours  
Between me and my pleasure!

*Ast.*

This cause is mine.

Forbear, sir—

*Seg.* What, sir mouth-piece, you again?

*Ast.* My Lord, I waive your insult to myself  
In recognition of the dignity  
You yet are new to, and that greater still  
You look in time to wear. But for this lady—  
Whom, if my cousin now, I hope to claim  
Henceforth by yet a nearer, dearer name—

*Seg.* And what care I? She is my cousin too:  
And if you be a Prince—well, am not I?  
Lord of the very soil you stand upon?  
By that, and by that right beside of blood  
That like a fiery fountain hitherto  
Pent in the rock leaps toward her at her touch,  
Mine, before all the cousins in Muscovy!  
You call me Prince of Poland, and yourselves  
My subjects—traitors therefore to this hour,  
Who let me perish all my youth away  
Chain'd there among the mountains; till, forsooth,  
Terrified at your treachery foregone,  
You spirit me up here, I know not how,  
Popinjay-like invest me like yourselves,  
Choke me with scent and music that I loathe,  
And, worse than all the music and the scent,  
With false, long-winded, fulsome compliment,

(103)



To fold them round my son, must now return (104)  
To press them to an empty heart again!

(*He sits on the throne.*)

*Seg.* That is the King?—My father?—

(*After a long pause.*) I have heard

That sometimes some blind instinct has been known

To draw to mutual recognition those

Of the same blood, beyond all memory

Divided, or ev’n never met before.

I know not how this is—perhaps in brutes

That live by kindlier instincts—but I know

That looking now upon that head whose crown

Pronounces him a sovereign king, I feel

No setting of the current in my blood

Tow’rd him as sire. How is ’t with you, old man,

Tow’rd him they call your son?—

*King.* Alas! Alas!

*Seg.* Your sorrow, then?

*King.* Beholding what I do.

*Seg.* Aye, but how know this sorrow, that has grown

And moulded to this present shape of man,

As of your own creation?

*King.* Ev’n from birth.

*Seg.* But from that hour to this, near, as I think,

Some twenty such renewals of the year

As trace themselves upon the barren rocks,

I never saw you, nor you me—unless,  
Unless, indeed, through one of those dark masks  
Through which a son might fail to recognize  
The best of fathers.

*King.* Be that as you will:  
But, now we see each other face to face,  
Know me as you I know; which did I not,  
By whatsoever signs, assuredly  
You were not here to prove it at my risk.

*Seg.* You are my father.  
And is it true then, as Clotaldo swears,  
'T was you that from the dawning birth of one  
Yourself brought into being,—you, I say,  
(105) Who stole his very birthright; not alone  
That secondary and peculiar right  
Of sovereignty, but even that prime  
Inheritance that all men share alike,  
And chain'd him—chain'd him!—like a wild beast's  
whelp,  
Among as savage mountains, to this hour?  
Answer if this be thus.

*King.* Oh, Segismund,  
In all that I have done that seems to you,  
And, without further hearing, fairly seems,  
Unnatural and cruel—'t was not I,  
But One who writes His order in the sky



I dared not misinterpret nor neglect,  
Who knows with what reluctance—

*Seg.* Oh, those stars,  
Those stars, that too far up from human blame  
To clear themselves, or careless of the charge,  
Still bear upon their shining shoulders all  
The guilt men shift upon them!

*King.* Nay, but think:  
Not only on the common score of kind,  
But that peculiar count of sovereignty—  
If not behind the beast in brain as heart,  
How should I thus deal with my innocent child,  
Doubly desired, and doubly dear when come,  
As that sweet second-self that all desire,  
And princes more than all, to root themselves  
By that succession in their people’s hearts?  
Unless at that superior Will, to which  
Not kings alone, but sovereign nature bows.

*Seg.* And what had those same stars to tell of me  
That should compel a father and a king  
So much against that double instinct?

*King.* That,  
Which I have brought you hither, at my peril,  
Against their written warning, to disprove,  
By justice, mercy, human kindness.

*Seg.* And therefore made yourself their instrument

(106) To make your son the savage and the brute  
 They only prophesied?—Are you not afraid,  
 Lest, irrespective as such creatures are  
 Of such relationship, the brute you made  
 Revenge the man you marr’d—like sire, like son,  
 To do by you as you by me have done?

*King.* You never had a savage heart from me;  
 I may appeal to Poland.

*Seg.* Then from whom?  
 If pure in fountain, poison’d by yourself  
 When scarce begun to flow.—To make a man  
 Not, as I see, degraded from the mould  
 I came from, nor compared to those about,  
 And then to throw your own flesh to the dogs!—  
 Why not at once, I say, if terrified  
 At the prophetic omens of my birth,  
 Have drown’d or stifled me, as they do whelps  
 Too costly or too dangerous to keep?

*King.* That, living, you might learn to live, and rule  
 Yourself and Poland.

*Seg.* By the means you took  
 To spoil for either?

*King.* Nay, but Segismund!  
 You know not—cannot know—happily wanting  
 The sad experience on which knowledge grows,  
 How the too early consciousness of power

Spoils the best blood; nor whether for your long-  
Constrain'd disheritance (which, but for me,  
Remember, and for my relenting love  
Bursting the bond of fate, had been eternal)  
You have not now a full indemnity;  
Wearing the blossom of your youth unspent  
In the voluptuous sunshine of a court,  
That often, by too early blossoming,  
Too soon deflowers the rose of royalty.

*Seg.* Aye, but what some precocious warmth may  
spill,  
May not an early frost as surely kill?

*King.* But, Segismund, my son, whose quick  
discourse

Proves I have not extinguish'd and destroy'd  
The Man you charge me with extinguishing, (107)  
However it condemn me for the fault  
Of keeping a good light so long eclips'd,  
Reflect! This is the moment upon which  
Those stars, whose eyes, although we see them not,  
By day as well as night are on us still,  
Hang watching up in the meridian heaven  
Which way the balance turns; and if to you—  
As by your dealing God decide it may,  
To my confusion!—let me answer it  
Unto yourself alone, who shall at once

Approve yourself to be your father's judge,  
 And sovereign of Poland in his stead,  
 By justice, mercy, self-sobriety,  
 And all the reasonable attributes  
 Without which, impotent to rule himself,  
 Others one cannot, and one must not rule;  
 But which if you but show the blossom of—  
 All that is past we shall but look upon  
 As the first out-fling of a generous nature  
 Rioting in first liberty; and if  
 This blossom do but promise such a flower  
 As promises in turn its kindly fruit:  
 Forthwith upon your brows the royal crown,  
 That now weighs heavy on my aged brows,  
 I will devolve; and while I pass away  
 Into some cloister, with my Maker there  
 To make my peace in penitence and prayer,  
 Happily settle the disorder'd realm  
 That now cries loudly for a lineal heir.

*Seg.* And so—

When the crown falters on your shaking head,  
 And slips the sceptre from your palsied hand,  
 And Poland for her rightful heir cries out;  
 When not only your stol'n monopoly  
 Fails you of earthly power, but 'cross the grave  
 The judgment-trumpet of another world

Calls to count for your abuse of this;  
Then, oh then, terrified by the double danger,  
You drag me from my den—

(108)

Boast not of giving up at last the power  
You can no longer hold, and never rightly  
Held, but in fee for him you robb'd it from;  
And be assured your Savage, once let loose,  
Will not be caged again so quickly; not  
By threat or adulation to be tamed,  
Till he have had his quarrel out with those  
Who made him what he is.

*King.*

Beware! Beware!

Subdue the kindled Tiger in your eye,  
Nor dream that it was sheer necessity  
Made me thus far relax the bond of fate,  
And, with far more of terror than of hope  
Threaten myself, my people, and the State.  
Know that, if old, I yet have vigour left  
To wield the sword as well as wear the crown;  
And if my more immediate issue fail,  
Not wanting scions of collateral blood,  
Whose wholesome growth shall more than compensate  
For all the loss of a distorted stem.

*Seg.* That will I straightway bring to trial—Oh,  
After a revelation such as this,  
The Last Day shall have little left to show



Of righted wrong and villany requited!  
 Nay, Judgment now beginning upon earth,  
 Myself, methinks, in right of all my wrongs,  
 Appointed heav'n's avenging minister,  
 Accuser, judge, and executioner,  
 Sword in hand, cite the guilty—First, as worst,  
 The usurper of his son's inheritance;  
 Him and his old accomplice, time and crime  
 Inveterate, and unable to repay  
 The golden years of life they stole away.  
 What, does he yet maintain his state, and keep  
 The throne he should be judged from? Down with him,  
 That I may trample on the false white head  
 So long has worn my crown! Where are my soldiers?  
 Of all my subjects and my vassals here

(109) Not one to do my bidding? Hark! A trumpet!

The trumpet—

*(He pauses as the trumpet sounds as in ACT I., and  
 masked Soldiers gradually fill in behind the Throne.)*

*King (rising before his throne). Aye, indeed, the  
 trumpet blows*

A memorable note, to summon those  
 Who, if forthwith you fall not at the feet  
 Of him whose head you threaten with the dust,  
 Forthwith shall draw the curtain of the Past  
 About you; and this momentary gleam



Of glory, that you think to hold life-fast,  
So coming, so shall vanish, as a dream.

*Seg.* He prophesies; the old man prophesies;  
And, at his trumpet's summons, from the tower  
The leash-bound shadows loosen'd after me  
My rising glory reach and over-lour—  
But, reach not I my height, he shall not hold,  
But with me back to his own darkness!

*(He dashes toward the throne and is enclosed by  
the Soldiers.)*

Traitors!

Hold off! Unhand me!—Am I not your king?  
And you would strangle him!—  
But I am breaking with an inward Fire  
Shall scorch you off, and wrap me on the wings  
Of conflagration from a kindled pyre  
Of lying prophecies and prophet-kings  
Above the extinguisht stars—Reach me the sword  
He flung me—Fill me such a bowl of wine  
As that you woke the day with—

*King.*

And shall close,—

But of the vintage that Clotaldo knows.

(110)

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Tower, &c., as in ACT I., SCENE I.*

SEGISMUND, *as at first*, and CLOTALDO.

*Clotaldo.* PRINCES and princesses, and counsellors,  
Fluster'd to right and left—my life made at—  
But that was nothing—  
Even the white-hair'd venerable King  
Seized on—Indeed, you made wild work of it; •  
And so discover'd in your outward action  
Flinging your arms about you in your sleep,  
Grinding your teeth—and, as I now remember,  
Woke mouthing out judgment and execution,  
On those about you.

*Seg.* Aye, I did indeed.

*Clo.* Ev'n now your eyes stare wild; your hair  
stands up—  
Your pulses throb and flutter, reeling still  
Under the storm of such a dream—

*Seg.* A dream!  
That seem'd as swearable reality  
As what I wake in now.

*Clo.* Aye—wondrous how  
Imagination in a sleeping brain

Out of the uncontingent senses draws  
Sensations strong as from the real touch;  
That we not only laugh aloud, and drench  
With tears our pillow; but in the agony  
Of some imaginary conflict, fight  
And struggle—ev'n as you did; some, 't is thought,  
Under the dreamt-of stroke of death have died.

*Seg.* And what so very strange too—In that world  
Where place as well as people all was strange,  
Ev'n I almost as strange unto myself,  
You only, you, Clotaldo—you, as much  
And palpably yourself as now you are,  
Came in this very garb you ever wore,  
By such a token of the past, you said,  
To assure me of that seeming present.

(111)

*Clo.* *Aye?*

*Seg.* *Aye*; and even told me of the very stars  
You tell me here of—how in spite of them,  
I was enlarged to all that glory.

*Clo.* *Aye,*  
By the false spirits' nice contrivance thus  
A little truth oft leavens all the false,  
The better to delude us.

*Seg.* For you know  
'T is nothing but a dream?

*Clo.* Nay, you yourself

Know best how lately you awoke from that  
You know you went to sleep on?—  
Why, have you never dreamt the like before?

*Seg.* Never, to such reality.

*Clo.* Such dreams

Are oftentimes the sleeping exhalations  
Of that ambition that lies smouldering  
Under the ashes of the lowest fortune;  
By which when reason slumbers, or has lost  
The reins of sensible comparison,  
We fly at something higher than we are—  
Scarce ever dive to lower—to be kings,  
Or conquerors, crown'd with laurel or with gold,  
Nay, mounting heav'n itself on eagle wings.  
Which, by the way, now that I think of it,  
May furnish us the key to this high flight—  
That royal Eagle we were watching, and  
Talking of as you went to sleep last night.

*Seg.* Last night? Last night?

*Clo.* Aye, do you remember

Envyng his immunity of flight,  
As, rising from his throne of rock, he sail'd  
Above the mountains far into the West,  
That burn'd about him, while with poisoning wings  
He darkled in it as a burning brand  
Is seen to smoulder in the fire it feeds?

*Seg.* Last night—last night—Oh, what a day was (112)  
that

Between that last night and this sad To-day!

*Clo.* And yet, perhaps,  
Only some few dark moments, into which  
Imagination, once lit up within  
And unconditional of time and space,  
Can pour infinities.

*Seg.* And I remember  
How the old man they call'd the King, who wore  
The crown of gold about his silver hair,  
And a mysterious girdle round his waist,  
Just when my rage was roaring at its height,  
And after which it all was dark again,  
Bid me beware lest all should be a dream.

*Clo.* Aye—there another specialty of dreams,  
That once the dreamer 'gins to dream he dreams,  
His foot is on the very verge of waking.

*Seg.* Would it had been upon the verge of death  
That knows no waking—  
Lifting me up to glory, to fall back,  
Stunn'd, crippled—wretcheder than ev'n before.

*Clo.* Yet not so glorious, Segismund, if you  
Your visionary honour wore so ill  
As to work murder and revenge on those  
Who meant you well.

*Seg.* Who meant me!—me! their Prince  
Chain’d like a felon—

*Clo.* Stay, stay—Not so fast,  
You dream’d the Prince, remember.

*Seg.* Then in dream  
Revenged it only.

*Clo.* True. But as they say  
Dreams are rough copies of the waking soul  
Yet uncorrected of the higher Will,  
So that men sometimes in their dreams confess  
An unsuspected, or forgotten, self;  
One must beware to check—aye, if one may,  
Stifle ere born, such passion in ourselves  
As makes, we see, such havoc with our sleep,  
(113) And ill reacts upon the waking day.  
And, by the bye, for one test, Segismund,  
Between such swearable realities—  
Since Dreaming, Madness, Passion, are akin  
In missing each that salutary rein  
Of reason, and the guiding will of man:  
One test, I think, of waking sanity  
Shall be that conscious power of self-control,  
To curb all passion, but much most of all  
That evil and vindictive, that ill squares  
With human, and with holy canon less,  
Which bids us pardon ev’n our enemies,



And much more those who, out of no ill will,  
Mistakenly have taken up the rod  
Which heav'n, they think, has put into their hands.

*Seg.* I think I soon shall have to try again—  
Sleep has not yet done with me.

*Clo.* Such a sleep.

Take my advice—'t is early yet—the sun  
Scarce up above the mountain; go within,  
And if the night deceived you, try anew  
With morning; morning dreams they say come true.

*Seg.* Oh, rather pray for me a sleep so fast  
As shall obliterate dream and waking too.

[Exit into the tower.

*Clo.* So sleep; sleep fast: and sleep away those two  
Night-potions, and the waking dream between.  
Which dream thou must believe; and, if to see  
Again, poor Segismund! that dream must be.—  
And yet, and yet, in these our ghostly lives,  
Half night, half day, half sleeping, half awake,  
How if our waking life, like that of sleep,  
Be all a dream in that eternal life  
To which we wake not till we sleep in death?  
How if, I say, the senses we now trust  
For date of sensible comparison,—  
Aye, ev'n the Reason's self that dates with them,  
Should be in essence or intensity

Hereafter so transcended, and awoke  
 (114) To a perceptive subtilty so keen  
 As to confess themselves befool'd before,  
 In all that now they will avouch for most?  
 One man—like this—but only so much longer  
 As life is longer than a summer's day,  
 Believed himself a king upon his throne,  
 And play'd at hazard with his fellows' lives,  
 Who cheaply dreamt away their lives to him.  
 The sailor dream'd of tossing on the flood:  
 The soldier of his laurels grown in blood:  
 The lover of the beauty that he knew  
 Must yet dissolve to dusty residue:  
 The merchant and the miser of his bags  
 Of finger'd gold: the beggar of his rags:  
 And all this stage of earth on which we seem  
 Such busy actors, and the parts we play'd,  
 Substantial as the shadow of a shade,  
 And Dreaming but a dream within a dream!

*Fife.* Was it not said, sir,  
 By some philosopher as yet unborn,  
 That any chimney-sweep who for twelve hours  
 Dreams himself king is happy as the king  
 Who dreams himself twelve hours a chimney-sweep?

*Clo.* A theme indeed for wiser heads than yours  
 To moralize upon—How came you here?—

*Fife.* Not of my own will, I assure you, sir,  
No matter for myself: but I would know  
About my mistress—I mean, master—

*Clo.* Oh,  
Now I remember—Well, your master-mistress  
Is well, and deftly on its errand speeds,  
As you shall—if you can but hold your tongue.  
Can you?

*Fife.* I ’d rather be at home again.

*Clo.* Where you shall be the quicker if while here  
You can keep silence.

*Fife.* I may whistle, then?  
Which by the virtue of my name I do,  
And also as a reasonable test  
Of waking sanity—

(115)

*Clo.* Well, whistle then;  
And for another reason you forgot,  
That while you whistle, you can chatter not.  
Only remember—if you quit this pass—

*Fife.* (His rhymes are out, or he had call’d it  
spot)—

*Clo.* A bullet brings you to.  
I must forthwith to court to tell the King  
The issue of this lamentable day,  
That buries all his hope in night. (*To FIFE.*) Farewell.  
Remember.

*Fife.* But a moment—but a word!

What shall I see my mis—mas—

*Clo.*

Be content:

All in good time; and then, and not before,

Never to miss your master any more.

[*Exit.*

*Fife.* Such talk of dreaming—dreaming—I begin

To doubt if I be dreaming I am Fife,

Who with a lad who call'd herself a boy

Because—I doubt there 's some confusion here—

He wore no petticoat, came on a time

Riding from Muscovy on half a horse,

Who must have dreamt she was a horse entire,

To cant me off upon my hinder face

Under this tower, wall-eyed and musket-tongued,

With sentinels, <sup>a-pacing</sup> ~~that~~ ~~pacing~~ up and down,

Crying All 's well when all is far from well,

All the day long, and all the night, until

I dream—if what is dreaming be not waking—

Of bells a-tolling and processions rolling

With candles, crosses, banners, San-benitos,

Of which I wear the flamy-finingest,

Through streets and places throng'd with fiery faces

To some black platform—

Oh, I shall take a fire into my hand

With thinking of my own dear Muscovy—

Only just over that Sierra there,

By which we tumbled headlong into—No-land.  
Now, if without a bullet after me,  
I could but get a peep of my old home— (116)  
Perhaps of my own mule to take me there—  
All 's still—perhaps the gentlemen within  
Are dreaming it is night behind their masks—  
God send 'em a good nightmare!—Now then—Hark!  
Voices—and up the rocks—and armèd men  
Climbing like cats—Puss in the corner then.  
[*He hides.*

*Enter Soldiers cautiously up the rocks.*

*Captain.* This is the frontier pass, at any rate,  
Where Poland ends and Muscovy begins.

*Soldier.* We must be close upon the tower, I  
know,  
That half way up the mountain lies ensconced.

*Capt.* How know you that?

*Sol.* He told me so—the Page  
Who put us on the scent.

*Sol. 2.* And, as I think,  
Will soon be here to run it down with us.

*Capt.* Meantime, our horses on these ugly rocks  
Useless, and worse than useless with their clatter—  
Leave them behind, with one or two in charge,  
And softly, softly, softly.

*Soldiers.*

— There it is!

— There what?—

— The tower—the fortress—

— That the tower!—

— That mouse-trap! We could pitch it down the rocks

With our own hands.

— The rocks it hangs among

Dwarf its proportions and conceal its strength;

Larger and stronger than you think.

— No matter;

No place for Poland's Prince to be shut up in.

At it at once!

*Capt.* No—no—I tell you wait—

Till those within give signal. For as yet

We know not who side with us, and the fort

(117) Is strong in man and musket.

*Sol.* Shame to wait

For odds with such a cause at stake.

*Capt.* Because

Of such a cause at stake we wait for odds—

For if not won at once, for ever lost:

For any long resistance on their part

Would bring Basilio's force to succour them

Ere we had rescued him we come to rescue.

So softly, softly, softly, still—



*A Soldier (discovering FIFE).* Hilloa!

*Soldiers.*

—Hilloa! Here 's some one skulking—

— Seize and gag him!

—Stab him at once, say I: the only way

To make all sure.

— Hold, every man of you!

And down upon your knees!—Why, 't is the Prince!

—The Prince!—

— Oh, I should know him anywhere,

And anyhow disguised.

— But the Prince is chain'd.

—And of a loftier presence—

— 'T is he, I tell you;

Only bewilder'd as he was before.

God save your Royal Highness! On our knees

Beseech you answer us!

*Fife.* Just as you please.

Well—'t is this country's custom, I suppose,

To take a poor man every now and then

And set him on the throne; just for the fun

Of tumbling him again into the dirt.

And now my turn is come. 'T is very pretty.

*Sol.* His wits have been distemper'd with their  
drugs.

But do you ask him, Captain.

*Capt.* On my knees,

And in the name of all who kneel with me,

I do beseech your Highness answer to

(118) Your royal title.

*Fife.* Still, just as you please.

In my own poor opinion of myself—

But that may all be dreaming, which it seems

Is very much the fashion in this country—

No Polish prince at all, but a poor lad

From Muscovy; where only help me back,

I promise never to contest the crown

Of Poland with whatever gentleman

You fancy to set up.

*Soldiers.*

{	—	From Muscovy?
	—A spy then—	
	—	Of Astolfo's —
	—	Spy! a spy!—
	—Hang him at once!	

*Fife.* No, pray don't dream of that!

*Sol.* How dared you then set yourself up for our  
Prince Segismund?

*Fife.* I set up!—I like that—  
When 't was yourselves be-siegesmunded me.

*Capt.* No matter—Look!—The signal from the  
tower.

Prince Segismund!

*Sol.* (*from the tower*). Prince Segismund!

*Capt.* All 's well.

Clotaldo safe secured?—

*Sol.* (*from the tower*). No—by ill luck,  
Instead of coming in, as we had look'd for,  
He sprang on horse at once, and off at gallop.

*Capt.* To Court, no doubt—a blunder that—And yet  
Perchance a blunder that may work as well  
As better forethought. Having no suspicion,  
So will he carry none where his not going  
Were of itself suspicious. But of those  
Within, who side with us?

*Sol.* Oh, one and all  
To the last man, persuaded or compell'd.

*Capt.* Enough: whatever be to be retrieved,  
No moment to be lost. For though Clotaldo  
Have no revolt to tell of in the tower,  
The capital will soon awake to ours,  
And the King's force come blazing after us.  
Where is the Prince?

(119)

*Sol.* Within; so fast asleep  
We woke him not ev'n striking off the chain  
We had so cursedly holp bind him with,  
Not knowing what we did; but too ashamed  
Not to undo ourselves what we had done.

*Capt.* No matter, nor by whosoever hands,  
Provided done. Come; we will bring him forth  
Out of that stony darkness here abroad,  
Where air and sunshine sooner shall disperse  
The sleepy fume which they have drugg'd him with.

*(They enter the tower, and thence bring out SEG-  
ISMUND asleep on a pallet, and set him in the  
middle of the stage.)*

*Capt.* Still, still so dead asleep, the very noise  
And motion that we make in carrying him  
Stirs not a leaf in all the living tree.

*Soldiers.*

{ If living—But if by some inward blow  
For ever and irrevocably fell'd  
By what strikes deeper to the root than sleep?  
—He 's dead! He 's dead! They 've killed him—  
— No—he breathes—  
And the heart beats—and now he breathes again  
Deeply, as one about to shake away  
The load of sleep.

*Capt.* Come, let us all kneel round,  
And with a blast of warlike instruments,  
And acclamation of all loyal hearts,  
Rouse and restore him to his royal right,  
From which no royal wrong shall drive him more.

*(They all kneel round his bed: trumpets, drums, &c.)*

*Soldiers* { Segismund! Segismund! Prince Segismund!  
 { King Segismund! Down with Basilio!  
 { Down with Astolfo! Segismund our King! &c.

*Soldier 1.* He stares upon us wildly. He cannot (120)  
 speak.

—— 2. I said so—driv'n him mad.

—— 3. Speak to him, Captain.

*Capt.* Oh, Royal Segismund, our Prince and King,  
 Look on us—listen to us—answer us,  
 Your faithful soldiery and subjects, now  
 About you kneeling, but on fire to rise  
 And cleave a passage through your enemies,  
 Until we seat you on your lawful throne.  
 For though your father, King Basilio,  
 Now King of Poland, jealous of the stars  
 That prophesy his setting with your rise,  
 Here holds you ignominiously eclips'd,  
 And would Astolfo, Duke of Muscovy,  
 Mount to the throne of Poland after him;  
 So will not we, your loyal soldiery  
 And subjects; neither those of us now first  
 Apprised of your existence and your right:  
 Nor those that hitherto deluded by  
 Allegiance false, their visors now fling down,  
 And craving pardon on their knees with us  
 For that unconscious disloyalty,

Offer with us the service of their blood;  
 Not only we and they; but at our heels  
 The heart, if not the bulk, of Poland follows  
 To join their voices and their arms with ours,  
 In vindicating with our lives our own  
 Prince Segismund to Poland and her throne.

*Soldiers* { Segismund, Segismund, Prince Segismund!  
 { Our own King Segismund, &c.

(*They all rise.*)

*Seg.* Again? So soon?—what, not yet done with me?  
 The sun is little higher up, I think,  
 Than when I last lay down,  
 To bury in the depth of your own sea  
 You that infest its shallows.

*Capt.* Sir!

*Seg.* And now,

(121) Not in a palace, not in the fine clothes  
 We all were in; but here, in the old place,  
 And in our old accoutrement—  
 Only your visors off, and lips unlockt  
 To mock me with that idle title—

*Capt.* Nay,

Indeed no idle title, but your own,  
 Then, now, and now for ever. For, behold,  
 Ev’n as I speak, the mountain passes fill  
 And bristle with the advancing soldiery



That glitters in your rising glory, sir;  
And, at our signal, echo to our cry,  
"Segismund, King of Poland!" &c.

(*Shouts, trumpets, &c.*)

*Seg.* Oh, how cheap  
The muster of a countless host of shadows,  
As impotent to do with as to keep!  
All this they said before—to softer music.

*Capt.* Soft music, sir, to what indeed were shadows,  
That, following the sunshine of a Court,  
Shall back be brought with it—if shadows still,  
Yet to substantial reckoning.

*Seg.* They shall?  
The white-hair'd and the white-wanded chamberlain,  
So busy with his wand too—the old King  
That I was somewhat hard on—he had been  
Hard upon me—and the fine-feather'd Prince  
Who crow'd so loud—my cousin,—and another,  
Another cousin, we will not bear hard on—  
And—But Clotaldo?

*Capt.* Fled, my Lord, but close  
Pursued; and then—

*Seg.* Then, as he fled before,  
And after he had sworn it on his knees,  
Came back to take me—where I am!—No more,  
No more of this! Away with you! Begone!

Whether but visions of ambitious night  
 That morning ought to scatter, or grown out  
 Of night's proportions you invade the day  
 To scare me from my little wits yet left,  
 (122) Begone! I know I must be near awake,  
 Knowing I dream; or, if not at my voice,  
 Then vanish at the clapping of my hands,  
 Or take this foolish fellow for your sport:  
 Dressing me up in visionary glories,  
 Which the first air of waking consciousness  
 Scatters as fast as from the almander<sup>1</sup>—  
 That, waking one fine morning in full flower,  
 One rougher insurrection of the breeze  
 Of all her sudden honour disadorns  
 To the last blossom, and she stands again  
 The winter-naked scare-crow that she was!

*Capt.* I know not what to do, nor what to say,  
 With all this dreaming; I begin to doubt  
 They have driv'n him mad indeed, and he and we  
 Are lost together.

*A Soldier (to Captain).* Stay, stay; I remember—  
 Hark in your ear a moment. *(Whispers.)*

*Capt.* So—so—so?—  
 Oh, now indeed I do not wonder, sir,

<sup>1</sup> *Almander, or almandre, Chaucer's word for almond-tree, Rom. Rose, 1363.*

Your senses dazzle under practices  
Which treason, shrinking from its own device,  
Would now persuade you only was a dream;  
But waking was as absolute as this  
You wake in now, as some who saw you then,  
Prince as you were and are, can testify:  
Not only saw, but under false allegiance  
Laid hands upon—

*Soldier 1.* I, to my shame!

*Soldier 2.* And I!

*Capt.* Who, to wipe out that shame, have been the first

To stir and lead us—Hark! (*Shouts, trumpets, &c.*)

*A Soldier.* Our forces, sir,  
Challenging King Basilio's, now in sight,  
And bearing down upon us.

*Capt.* Sir, you hear;  
A little hesitation and delay,  
And all is lost—your own right, and the lives  
Of those who now maintain it at that cost;  
With you all saved and won; without, all lost.  
That former recognition of your right  
Grant but a dream, if you will have it so;  
Great things forecast themselves by shadows great:  
Or will you have it, this like that dream too,  
People and place, and time itself, all dream—

Yet, being in 't, and as the shadows come  
Quicker and thicker than you can escape,  
Adopt your visionary soldiery,  
Who, having struck a solid chain away,  
Now put an airy sword into your hand,  
And harnessing you piece-meal till you stand  
Amidst us all complete in glittering,  
If unsubstantial, steel—

*Rosaura* (*without*). The Prince! The Prince!

*Capt.* Who calls for him?

*Sol.* The Page who spurr'd us hither,  
And now, dismounted from a foaming horse—

*Enter ROSAURA.*

*Rosaura.* Where is—but where I need no further ask,  
Where the majestic presence, all in arms,  
Mutely proclaims and vindicates himself.

*Fife.* My darling Lady-bird—

*Ros.* My own good Fife,  
Keep to my side—and silence!—Oh, my Lord,  
For the third time behold me here where first  
You saw me, by a happy misadventure  
Losing my own way here to find it out  
For you to follow with these loyal men,  
Adding the moment of my little cause  
To yours; which, so much mightier as it is,

By a strange chance runs hand in hand with mine;  
The self-same foe who now pretends your right,  
Withholding mine—that, of itself alone,  
I know the royal blood that runs in you  
Would vindicate, regardless of your own:  
The right of injured innocence; and, more,  
Spite of this epicene attire, a woman’s;  
And of a noble stock I will not name  
Till I, who brought it, have retrieved the shame.  
Whom Duke Astolfo, Prince of Muscovy,  
With all the solemn vows of wedlock won,  
And would have wedded, as I do believe,  
Had not the cry of Poland for a Prince  
Call’d him from Muscovy to join the prize  
Of Poland with the fair Estrella’s eyes.  
I, following him hither, as you saw,  
Was cast upon these rocks; arrested by  
Clotaldo: who for an old debt of love  
He owes my family, with all his might  
Served, and had served me further, till my cause  
Clash’d with his duty to his sovereign,  
Which, as became a loyal subject, sir,  
(And never sovereign had a loyaller,)  
Was still his first. He carried me to Court,  
Where, for the second time, I cross’d your path;  
Where, as I watch’d my opportunity,

(124)

Suddenly broke this public passion out;  
Which, drowning private into public wrong,  
Yet swiftness sweeps it to revenge along.

*Seg.* Oh God, if this be dreaming, charge it not  
To burst the channel of enclosing sleep  
And drown the waking reason! Not to dream  
Only what dreamt shall once or twice again  
Return to buzz about the sleeping brain  
Till shaken off for ever—

But reassailing one so quick, so thick—  
The very figure and the circumstance  
Of sense-confest reality foregone  
In so-call'd dream so palpably repeated,  
The copy so like the original,  
We know not which is which; and dream so-call'd  
Itself inweaving so inextricably  
Into the tissue of acknowledged truth;

(125) The very figures that empeople it  
Returning to assert themselves no phantoms  
In something so much like meridian day,  
And in the very place that not my worst  
And veriest disenchanter shall deny  
For the too well-remember'd theatre  
Of my long tragedy—Strike up the drums!  
If this be Truth and all of us awake,  
Indeed a famous quarrel is at stake:



If but a Vision I will see it out,  
And, drive the Dream, I can but join the rout.

*Capt.* And in good time, sir, for a palpable  
Touchstone of truth and rightful vengeance too,  
Here is Clotaldo taken.

*Soldiers.* In with him!  
In with the traitor! (*CLOTALDO is brought in.*)

*Seg.* Aye, Clotaldo, indeed—  
Himself—in his old habit—his old self—  
What! back again, Clotaldo, for a while  
To swear me this for truth, and afterwards  
All for a dreaming lie?

*Clo.* Awake or dreaming,  
Down with that sword, and down these traitors theirs,  
Drawn in rebellion 'gainst their Sovereign.

*Seg. (about to strike).* Traitor! Traitor yourself!  
—But soft—soft—soft!—  
You told me, not so very long ago,  
Awake or dreaming—I forget—my brain  
Is not so clear about it—but I know  
One test you gave me to discern between,  
Which mad and dreaming people cannot master;  
Or if the dreamer could, so best secure  
A comfortable waking—Was 't not so?—  
(*To ROSAURA.*) Needs not your intercession now, you  
see,

As in the dream before—

Clotaldo, rough old nurse and tutor too

That only traitor wert, to me if true—

Give him his sword; set him on a fresh horse;

Conduct him safely through my rebel force;

(126) And so God speed him to his sovereign's side!

Give me your hand; and whether all awake

Or all a-dreaming, ride, Clotaldo, ride—

Dream-swift—for fear we dreams should overtake.

*(A Battle may be supposed to take place; after which)*

SCENE II. *A wooded pass near the field of battle:  
drums, trumpets, firing, &c. Cries of “God save  
Basilio! Segismund,” &c. Enter FIFE running.*

*Fife.* God save them both, and save them all! say I!—  
Oh—what hot work!—Whichever way one turns  
The whistling bullet at one's ears—I've drifted  
Far from my mad young—master—whom I saw  
Tossing upon the very crest of battle,  
Beside the Prince—God save her first of all!  
With all my heart I say and pray—and so  
Commend her to His keeping—bang!—bang!—bang!—  
And for myself—scarce worth His thinking of—  
I'll see what I can do to save myself  
Behind this rock until the storm blows over.

(*Skirmishes, shouts, firing, &c. After some time enter*  
KING BASILIO, ASTOLFO, *and* CLOTALDO.)

*King.* The day is lost!

*Ast.* Do not despair—the rebels—

*King.* Alas! the vanquisht only are the rebels.

*Clotaldo.* Ev'n if this battle lost us, 't is but one  
Gain'd on their side, if you not lost in it;  
Another moment and too late: at once  
Take horse, and to the capital, my liege,  
Where in some safe and holy sanctuary  
Save Poland in your person.

*Ast.* Be persuaded:  
You know your son: have tasted of his temper;  
At his first onset threatening unprovoked  
The crime predicted for his last and worst.  
How whetted now with such a taste of blood,  
And thus far conquest!

*King.* Aye, and how he fought!  
Oh how he fought, Astolfo; ranks of men  
Falling as swathes of grass before the mower;  
I could but pause to gaze at him, although,  
Like the pale horseman of the Apocalypse,  
Each moment brought him nearer—Yet I say,  
I could but pause and gaze on him, and pray  
Poland had such a warrior for her king.

(127)

*Ast.* The cry of triumph ~~up~~ upon the other side  
Gains ground upon us here—there ’s but a moment  
For you, my liege, to do, for me to speak,  
Who back must to the field, and what man may,  
Do, to retrieve the fortunes of the day. (*Firing.*)

*Fife* (*falling forward, shot*). Oh, Lord, have mercy  
on me.

*King.* What a shriek—  
Oh, some poor creature wounded in a cause  
Perhaps not worth the loss of one poor life!—  
So young too—and no soldier—

*Fife.* A poor lad  
Who choosing play at hide and seek with death,  
Just hid where death just came to look for him;  
For there ’s no place, I think, can keep him out,  
Once he ’s his eye upon you. All grows dark—  
You glitter finely too—Well—we are dreaming—  
But when the bullet ’s off—Heav’n save the mark!  
So tell my mister—mastress— (*Dies.*)

*King.* Oh God! How this poor creature’s ignorance  
Confounds our so-call’d wisdom! Even now  
When death has stopt his lips, the wound through which  
His soul went out, still with its bloody tongue  
Preaching how vain our struggle against fate!

(*Voices within.*) After them! After them! This  
way! This way!

The day is ours—Down with Basilio, &c.

*Ast.* Fly, sir—

*King.* And slave-like flying not out-ride  
The fate which better like a King abide!

*Enter SEGISMUND, ROSAURA, Soldiers, &c.*

*Segismund.* Where is the King?

*King (prostrating himself).* Behold him,—by this (128)  
late

Anticipation of resistless fate,  
Thus underneath your feet his golden crown,  
And the white head that wears it, laying down,  
His fond resistance hope to expiate.

*Segismund.* Princes and warriors of Poland—you  
That stare on this unnatural sight aghast,  
Listen to one who, Heav'n-inspired to do  
What in its secret wisdom Heav'n forecast,  
By that same Heav'n instructed prophet-wise  
To justify the present in the past.  
What in the sapphire volume of the skies  
Is writ by God's own finger misleads none,  
But him whose vain and misinstructed eyes,  
They mock with misinterpretation,  
Or who, mistaking what he rightly read,  
Ill commentary makes, or misapplies  
Thinking to shirk or thwart it. Which has done  
The wisdom of this venerable head;



Who, well provided with the secret key  
 To that gold alphabet, himself made me,  
 Himself, I say, the savage he fore-read  
 Fate somehow should be charged with; nipp'd the growth  
 Of better nature in constraint and sloth,  
 That only bring to bear the seed of wrong,  
 And turn'd the stream to fury whose out-burst  
 Had kept his lawful channel uncoerced,  
 And fertilized the land he flow'd along.  
 Then like to some unskilful duellist,  
 Who having over-reach'd himself pushing too hard  
 His foe, or but a moment off his guard—  
 What odds, when Fate is one's antagonist!—  
 Nay, more, this royal father, self-dismay'd  
 At having Fate against himself array'd,  
 Upon himself the very sword he knew  
 Should wound him, down upon his bosom drew,  
 (129) That might well handled, well have wrought; or, kept  
 Undrawn, have harmless in the scabbard slept.  
 But Fate shall not by human force be broke,  
 Nor foil'd by human feint; the Secret learn'd  
 Against the scholar by that master turn'd  
 Who to himself reserves the master-stroke.  
 Witness whereof this venerable Age,  
 Thrice crown'd as Sire, and Sovereign, and Sage,  
 Down to the very dust dishonour'd by



The very means he tempted to defy  
The irresistible. And shall not I,  
Till now the mere dumb instrument that wrought  
The battle Fate has with my father fought,  
Now the mere mouth-piece of its victory—  
Oh, shall not I, the champion's sword laid down,  
Be yet more shamed to wear the teacher's gown,  
And, blushing at the part I had to play,  
Down where that honour'd head I was to lay  
By this more just submission of my own,  
The treason Fate has forced on me atone?

*King.* Oh, Segismund, in whom I see indeed,  
Out of the ashes of my self-extinction  
A better self revive; if not beneath  
Your feet, beneath your better wisdom bow'd,  
The Sovereignty of Poland I resign,  
With this its golden symbol; which if thus  
Saved with its silver head inviolate,  
Shall nevermore be subject to decline;  
But when the head that it alights on now  
Falls honour'd by the very foe that must,  
As all things mortal, lay it in the dust,  
Shall star-like shift to his successor's brow.

*Shouts, trumpets, &c.* God save King Segismund!

*Seg.* For what remains—  
As for my own, so for my people's peace,

Astolfo's and Estrella's plighted hands  
I disunite, and taking hers to mine,  
His to one yet more dearly his resign.

*Shouts, &c.* God save Estrella, Queen of Poland!

(130) *Seg.* (to CLOTALDO). You

That with unflinching duty to your King,  
Till countermanded by the mightier Power,  
Have held your Prince a captive in the tower,  
Henceforth as strictly guard him on the throne,  
No less my people's keeper than my own.<sup>1</sup>

You stare upon me all, amazed to hear  
The word of civil justice from such lips  
As never yet seem'd tuned to such discourse.  
But listen—In that same enchanted tower,  
Not long ago I learn'd it from a dream  
Expounded by this ancient prophet here;  
And which he told me, should it come again,  
How I should bear myself beneath it; not

<sup>1</sup> In Calderon's drama, the Soldier who liberates Segismund meets with even worse recompense than in the version below. I suppose some such saving clause against prosperous treason was necessary in the days of Philip IV., if not later.

*Capt.* And what for him, my liege, who made you free  
To honour him who held you prisoner?

*Seg.* By such self-proclamation self-betray'd  
Less to your Prince's service or your King's  
Loyal, than to the recompence it brings;  
The tower he leaves I make you keeper of  
For life—and, mark you, not to leave alive;  
For treason may, but not the traitor, thrive.

As then with angry passion all on fire,  
Arguing and making a distemper'd soul;  
But ev'n with justice, mercy, self-control,  
As if the dream I walk'd in were no dream,  
And conscience one day to account for it.  
A dream it was in which I thought myself,  
And you that hail'd me now then hail'd me King,  
In a brave palace that was all my own,  
Within, and all without it, mine; until,  
Drunk with excess of majesty and pride,  
Methought I tower'd so high and swell'd so wide,  
That of myself I burst the glittering bubble,  
That my ambition had about me blown,  
And all again was darkness. Such a dream  
As this in which I may be walking now;  
Dispensing solemn justice to you shadows,  
Who make believe to listen; but anon,  
With all your glittering arms and equipage,  
King, princes, captains, warriors, plume and steel,  
Aye, ev'n with all your airy theatre,  
May flit into the air you seem to rend  
With acclamation, leaving me to wake  
In the dark tower; or dreaming that I wake  
From this that waking is; or this and that  
Both waking or both dreaming; such a doubt  
Confounds and clouds our mortal life about.

(131)

And, whether wake or dreaming; this I know,  
How dream-wise human glories come and go;  
Whose momentary tenure not to break,  
Walking as one who knows he soon may wake,  
So fairly carry the full cup, so well  
Disorder'd insolence and passion quell,  
That there be nothing after to upbraid  
Dreamer or doer in the part he play'd,  
Whether To-morrow's dawn shall break the spell,  
Or the Last Trumpet of the eternal Day,  
When Dreaming with the Night shall pass away.

THE END.

POLONIUS.





# P O L O N I U S :

. A COLLECTION

OF

WISE SAWS AND MODERN INSTANCES.

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Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I WILL BE BRIEF.

LONDON :  
WILLIAM PICKERING.  
1852.

*“ The Part of Hamlet was omitted ” from Polonius—I mean Michel de Montaigne, of whom I have since added a few commentaries. A little collection of Aphorisms from him (Paris, 1783) is one of the few Books of the sort that I have found readable.\**

*E. FG.*

\* [From a copy inscribed “ Gerald FitzGerald from compiler Edward FitzGerald,” in possession of Mr. E. A. Denham, New York. See also p. 245.]

## PREFACE.

FEW books are duller than books of Aphorisms and Apophthegms. A Jest-book is, proverbially, no joke; a Wit-book, perhaps, worse; but dullest of all, probably, is the Moral-book, which this little volume pretends to be. So with men: the Jester, the Wit, and the Moralist, each wearisome in proportion as each deals exclusively in his one commodity. “Too much of one thing,” says Fuller, “is good for nothing.”

Bacon’s “Apophthegms” seem to me the best collection of many men’s sayings; the greatest variety of wisdom, good sense, wit, humour, and even simple “naïveté,” (as one must call it for want of a native word,) all told in a style whose dignity and antiquity (together with perhaps our secret consciousness of the gravity and even tragic greatness of the narrator) add a particular humour to the lighter stories.

Johnson said Selden’s Table-talk was worth all the French “Ana” together. Here also we find wit, humour, fancy, and good sense alternating, something as one has heard in some scholarly English gentleman’s after-dinner talk—the best English common-sense in the best common English. It outlives, I believe, all Selden’s books; and is (ii) probably much better, collected even imperfectly by another, than if he had put it together himself.

## PREFACE.

What would become of Johnson if Boswell had not done as much for his talk? If the Doctor himself, or some of his more serious admirers, had recorded it!

And (leaving alone Epictetus, À Kempis, and other Moral aphorists) most of the collections of this nature I have seen, are made up mainly from Johnson and the Essayists of the last century, his predecessors and imitators; when English thought and language had lost so much of their vigour, freshness, freedom, and picturesqueness—so much, in short, of their native character, under the French polish that came in with the second Charles. When one lights upon, “He who”—“The man who”—“Of all the virtues that adorn the breast”—&c.,—one is tempted to swear, with Sir Peter Teazle, against all “*sentiment*,” and shut the book. How glad should we be to have Addison’s Table-talk as we have Johnson’s! and how much better are Spence’s Anecdotes of Pope’s Conversation than Pope’s own letters!

If a scanty reader could, for the use of yet scantier readers than himself, put together a few sentences of the wise, and also of the less wise,—(and Tom Tyers said a good thing or two in his day,<sup>1</sup>)—from Plato, Bacon, Rochefoucauld, Goethe, Carlyle, and others,—a little Truth, new or old, each after his kind—nay, of Truism

(iii) <sup>1</sup> “Tom Tyers,” said Johnson, “describes me best, ‘a ghost who never speaks till spoken to.’ Another sentence in Tom’s ‘Resolutions’ still remains in my memory, ‘Mem.—to think more of the living and less of the dead; for the dead have a world of their own.’” Tom was the original of Tom Restless in the Rambler, a literary gossip about London in those days, author of Anecdotes of Pope, Addison, Johnson, &c. Johnson used to say of him, “I never see Tom but he tells me something I did not know before.”

## PREFACE.

too, (into which all truth must ultimately be dogs-eared,) (iii) and which, perhaps, "the wit of one, and the wisdom of many," has preserved in the shape of some nameless and dateless Proverbs which yet "retain life and vigour," and widen into new relations with the widening world—

Not a book of *Beauties*—other than as all who have the best to tell, have also naturally the best way of telling it; nor of the "limbs and outward flourishes" of Truth, however eloquent; but in general, and as far as I understand, of clear, decided, wholesome, and available insight into our nature and duties. "Brevity is the soul of *Wit*" in a far wider sense than as we now use the word. "As the centre of the greatest circle," says Sir Edward Coke, "is but a little prick, so the matter of even the biggest business lies in a little room." So the "Sentences of the Seven" are said to be epitomes of whole systems of philosophy: which also Carlyle says is the case with many a homely proverb. Anyhow that famous *Μηδὲν ἄγαν*, the boundary law of Goodness itself, as of all other things, (if one could only know how to apply it,) brings one up with a wholesome halt every now and then, and no where |more fitly than in a book of this kind, though, as usual, (iv) I am just now violating in the very act of vindicating it.<sup>1</sup>

The grand Truisms of life only life itself is said to bring to life. We hear them from grandam and nurse,

<sup>1</sup> *These oracular Truisms are some of them as impracticable as more elaborate Truths. Who will do "too much" if he knows it is "too much"? "Know thyself" is far easier said than done; and might not a passage like the following make one suppose Shakspeare had Bacon in his eye as the original Polonius, if the dates tallied?*

"He that seeketh Victory over his Nature, let him not set himself



## PREFACE.

write them in copy-books, but only understand them as  
(v) years turn up occasions for practising or experiencing them. Nay, the longest and most eventful life scarce suffices to teach us the most important of all. It is Death, says Sir Walter Raleigh, “that puts into a man all the wisdom of the world without saying a word.” Only when we have to part with a thing do we feel its value—unless indeed *after* we have parted with it—a very serious consideration.

When Sir Walter Scott lay dying, he called for his son-in-law, and while the Tweed murmured through the woods, and a September sun lit up the towers, whose growth he had watched so eagerly, said to him, “Be a good man; only that can comfort you when you come to lie here!” “*Be a good man!*” To that threadbare Truism shrunk all that gorgeous tapestry of written and real Romance!

“You knew all this,” wrote Johnson to Mrs. Thrale,

too great, nor too small Tasks; For the first will make him dejected by often Failings, and the second will make him a small Proceeder, though by often Prevailings. And at the first, let him practise with Helps, as Swimmers do with Bladders, or Rushes; But after a time, let him practise with Disadvantages, as Dancers do with thick Shoes. For it breeds great Perfection if the Practise be harder than the Use. Where *Nature* is mighty, and therefore the Victory hard, the Degrees had need be; first, to stay and arrest *Nature* in time: like to him, that would say over the four-and-twenty Letters, when he was angry; Then to go less in quantity, as if one should, in forbearing Wine, come from drinking Healths, to a draught at a Meal,” &c.\*

*If all chance of controlling nature depended on advice like this! What is too great for a man's nature?—what too little? what are bladders, and what thick shoes? when is one to throw off one and take the other? He was a more effectual philosopher who thought of repeating the alphabet when he was angry; though it is not every man who knows when he is that.*

\* [Bacon's Essays, xxxviii. “Of Nature in Man.”]



## PREFACE.

rallying for a little while from his final attack—" You knew all this, and I thought that I knew it too: but I know it now with a new conviction."

Perhaps, next to realizing all this in our own lives, (when just too late,) we become most sensible of it in reading the lives and deaths of others, such as Scott's and Johnson's; when we see all the years of life, with all their ambitions, loves, animosities, schemes of action—all the "curas supervacuas, spes inanes, et inexpectatos exitus hujus fugacissimæ vitæ"<sup>1</sup>—summed up in a volume or two; and what seemed so long a history to them, but a Winter's Tale to us.

Death itself was no Truism to Adam and Eve, nor to (vi) many of their successors, I suppose; nay, some of their very latest descendants, it is said, have doubted if it be an inevitable necessity of life: others, with more probability, whether a man can fully comprehend its inevitableness till life itself be half over; beginning to believe he must Die about the same time he begins to believe he is a Fool.

"As are the leaves on the trees, even so are man's generations;

This is the truest verse ever a poet has sung:

Nevertheless few hearing it hear; Hope, flattering alway,

Lives in the bosom of all—reigns in the blood of the Young."

"And why," says the note-book of one 'nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita,' "does one day still linger in my memory? I had started one fine October morning on a ramble through the villages that lie beside the Ouse. In high health and cloudless spirits, one regret perhaps hang-

<sup>1</sup> See Petrarch's *Inscription in his Virgil*.

## PREFACE.

ing upon the horizon of the heart, I walked through Sharnbrook up the hill, and paused by the church on the summit to look about me. The sun shone, the clouds flew, the yellow trees shook in the wind, the river rippled in breadths of light and dark; rooks and daws wheeled and cawed aloft in the changing spaces of blue above the spire; the churchyard all still in the sunshine below."

Old Shallow was not very sensible of Death even when moralizing about old Double's—" Certain, 'tis very cer-  
(vii) tain,|Death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all—all shall die—How good a yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair? "

Could we but on our journey hear the Truisms of life called out to us, not by Chapone, Cogan, &c., but by such a voice as called out to Sir Lancelot and Sir Galahad, when they were about to part in the forest—" Thynke for to doo wel; for the one shall never see the other before the dredeful day of dome! "

Our ancestors were fond of such monitory Truisms inscribed upon dials, clocks, and fronts of buildings; as that of " Time and Tide tarry for no man," still to be seen on the Temple sun-dial; and that still sterner one I have read of, " Go about your business " <sup>1</sup>—not even moralizing upon me. I dare say those who came suddenly and unaware upon the Γνώθι Σεαυτόν over the Delphian temple were brought to a stand for a while, some thrown back into themselves by it; others (and those probably much the greater number) seeing nothing at all in it.

<sup>1</sup> *On St. James's Church, Bury St. Edmund's.*

## PREFACE.

The parapet balustrade round the roof of Castle Ashby, in Northamptonshire, is carved into the letters, "NISI DOMINUS CUSTODIAT DOMUM, FRUSTRA VIGILAT QUI CUSTODIT EAM." This is not amiss to decipher as you come up the long avenue some summer or autumn day, and to moralize upon afterwards at the little "Rose and Crown" at Yardley, if such good Homebrewed be there as used to be before I knew I was to die.<sup>1</sup>

We move away the grass from a tombstone, itself (viii) half buried, to get at any trite memento of mortality, where it preaches more to us than many new volumes of hot-pressed morals. Not but we can feel the warning whisper too, when Jeremy Taylor tells us that one day the bell shall toll, and it shall be asked, "For whom?" and answered, "For *us*."

Some of these Truisms come home to us also in the shape of old Proverbs, quickened by wit, fancy, rhyme, alliteration, &c. These have been well defined to be "the Wit of one and the Wisdom of many;" and are in some measure therefore historical indexes of the nation that originates or retains them. Our English Proverbs abound with good sense, energy, and courage, as com-

<sup>1</sup> "A party of us were looking one autumn afternoon at a country church. Over the western door was a clock with, 'THE HOUR COMETH,' written in gold, upon it. Polonius proceeded to explain, rather (viii) lengthily, what a good inscription it was. 'But not very apposite,' said Rosencrantz, 'sceing the clock has stopped.' The sun was indeed setting, and the hands of the clock, glittering full in his face, pointed up to noon. Osric however, with a slight lisp, said the inscription was all the more apt, 'for the hour would come to the clock, instead of the clock following the hour.' On which Horatio, taking out his watch, (which he informed us was just then more correct than the sun,) told us that unless we set off home directly we should be late for dinner. That was one way of considering an Inscription."

## PREFACE.

pactly expressed as may be; making them properly enough the ready money of a people more apt to act than talk. “They drive the nail home in discourse,” says Ray, “and clench it with the strongest conviction.”

(ix) A thoughtful Frenchman says that nearly all which expresses any decided opinion has “quelque chose de métrique, ou de mesure.” So as even so bare-faced a truism as “Of two evils choose the least,” (superfluous reason, and no rhyme at all!) is not without its secret poetic charm. How much vain hesitation has it not cut short!

So that if Cogan and Chapone had not been made poetical by the gods, but only brief—

Sometimes indeed our old friend the Proverb gets too much clipt in his course of circulation: as in the case of that very important business to all Englishmen, a Cold—“STUFF A COLD AND STARVE A FEVER,” has been grievously misconstrued, so as to bring on the fever it was meant to prevent.

Certainly Dr. Johnson (who could hit hard too) not only did not always drive the nail home, but made it a nail of wax, which Fuller truly says you can’t drive at all. “These sorrowful meditations,” the Doctor says of Prince Rasselas, “fastened on his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves; and was awakened to more vigorous exertion by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark that ‘what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.’”

But perhaps this was a Maid of Honour. If so, how-



## PREFACE.

ever, it proves that Maids of Honour of Rasselas' court did not talk like those of George the Second's. Witness jolly Mary Bellenden's letters to Lady Suffolk.

Swift has a fashionable dialogue almost made up of vulgar|adages, which I should have thought the Beaux (x) and Belles left to the Mary Bellendens and Country Squires of his day—

“Grounding their fat faiths on old country proverbs.”

Nor do I see any trace of it in the comedies of Congreve, Vanbrugh, &c.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I find in my “Complete Correspondent,” which seems begotten by Dr. Johnson on Miss Seward, the following advice about Proverbs. “STYLE. Vulgarity in language is a proof either of a mean education or of associating with low company. Coarse Proverbial expressions furnish such with their choicest flowers of rhetoric. Instead of saying, ‘Necessity compelled,’ such an one would say, ‘Needs must when the devil drives.’ Such vulgar aphorisms ought especially to be rejected as border upon profaneness. A good writer would not say, ‘It was all through you it happened,’ but ‘It happened through your inattention,’” &c.

This elegance of style however does not always mend the matter; as we read in Boswell that Dr. Johnson, having set the company laughing by saying of some lady in the good English so natural to him, “She’s good at bottom,” tried to make them grave again by, “What’s the laugh for? I say the woman is fundamentally good.”

The following is one of Punch’s jokes; I do not know if true of the author referred to—not true, I should suppose, of the class to which he belongs, (except as regards the foolish and vulgar use of French)—but very true of the Hammersmith education, of which my complete Letter-writer—Correspondent, I mean—is an exponent.

## DESULTORY REFLECTIONS.

By Lord William Lennox.

*Iniquitous intercourses contaminate proper habits.*

*One individual may pilfer a quadruped, where another may not cast his eyes over the boundary of a field.*

## PREFACE.

(xi) Erasmus says that the Proverb is “ a nonnullis Græcorum,” thus defined, λόγος ὠφέλιμος ἐν τῷ βίῳ, ἐν μέτριά παρακρόψει πολὺ τὸ χρήσιμον ἔχων ἐν ἑαυτῷ.” The definition, it might seem at first, rather of a Fable, or Parable, than a Proverb. But, beside that the titles of many fables *do* become proverbs—“ Fox and Grapes,” “ Dog in Manger,” &c., the title including the whole signification, (like those “ Sentences of the Seven,”)—so many of our best proverbs *are* little whole fables in themselves; as when we say, “ The Fat sow knows not what the Lean one thinks,” &c.

We are fantastic, histrionic creatures; having so much of the fool, loving a mixture of the lie, loving to get our fellow-creatures into our scrapes and make them play our parts—the Ass of our dulness, the Fox of our cunning, and so on—in whose several natures those of our Neighbours, as we think, come to a climax. Certainly, swollen Wealth is well enacted by the fat sow reclining in her sty, as a Dowager in an opera-box, serenely unconscious of all her kindred’s leanness without. The phrase “ rolling in wealth ” too suggests the same fable.

(xii) Indeed, is not every Metaphor (without which we cannot speak five words) in some sort a Fable—one thing

(xi) *In the absence of the feline race, the mice give themselves up to various pastimes.*

*Feathered bipeds of advanced age are not to be entrapped with the outer husks of corn.*

*Casualties will take place in the most excellently conducted family circles.*

*More confectioners than are absolutely necessary are apt to ruin the potage.—Lennox’s Lacon.*



## PREFACE.

spoken of under the likeness of another? And how easy (if need were) it is to dramatize, for instance, Bacon's figure of discovering the depth, not by looking on the surface ever so long, but beginning to *sound* it!

And are these Fables so fabulous after all? If beasts do not really rise to the level on which we amuse ourselves by putting them, we have an easy way of really sinking to theirs. It is no fable surely that Circe *bodily* transformed the captives of Sensuality into apes, hogs, and goats; as Cunning, Hypocrisy, and Rapacity graft us with the sharp noses, sidelong eyes, and stealthy gait, of wolves, hyænas, foxes, and serpents; sometimes, as in old fable too, the mis-features and foul expressions of two baser animal passions—as lust and cunning for instance, with perhaps cruelty beside—conforming man into a double or triple monster, more hideous than any single beast. On the other hand, our more generous dispositions determine outwardly into the large aspect of the lion, or the horse's speaking eye and inspired nostril. “There are innumerable animals to which man may degrade his image, inward and outward; only a few to which he can properly (and that in the Affections only) level it: but it is an ideal and invisible type to which he must erect it.”

“Such kind of parabolical wisdom,” says Bacon, “was much in use in ancient times, as by the Fables of Æsop, and|the brief Sentences of the Seven, and the use of (xiii) hieroglyphics may appear. And the cause was, for that it was then of necessity to express any point of reason which was more sharp or subtle than the vulgar in that manner,

## PREFACE.

because men in those times wanted both variety of examples and subtlety of conceit; and as Hieroglyphics were before letters, so Parables were before arguments.”

We cannot doubt that Christianity itself made way by means of such Parables as never were uttered before or after. Imagine (be it with reverence) that Jeremy Bentham had had the promulgation of it!

And as this figurative teaching was best for simple people, “even now,” adds Bacon, “such Parables do retain much life and vigour, because Reason cannot be so sensible, nor examples so fit.” Next to the Bible parables, I believe John Bunyan remains the most effective preacher, among the poor, to this day.

Nor is it only simple matters for simple people that admit such illustration.<sup>1</sup> Again, Bacon says, “It is a (xiv) rule that|whatsoever science is not consonant to pre-suppositions must pray in aid Similitudes.” “Neither Philosopher nor Historiographer,” says Sir Philip Sidney, “could at the first have entered into the gates of popular judgments, if they had not taken a great Passport of

<sup>1</sup> *Fable might be made to exemplify the syllogism, but not to illustrate it. “The Lion swore he would eat all flesh that came in his way. One day he set his paw on a Polecat: the Polecat pleaded that he was small, ill-flavoured, &c.; but the Lion said, ‘I have sworn to eat all flesh that came in my way: you are flesh come in my way; therefore I will eat you.’” The syllogism is proved: but the speakers do not illustrate, but obscure it, but because it is a matter of understanding, of which no animal but man is the representative. Your Lion, noble beast as he is, is only to be trusted with an Enthymeme. One sees this fault in the|Eastern fables. Birds and beasts are made to reason, instead of representing the passions and affections they really share with men. This also is the vital fault of Dryden’s Hind and Panther.*

## PREFACE.

Poetry," which deals so in Similitudes. "For he" (the poet) "doth not only show the way, but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth, as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that, full of that taste, you may long to pass further."

Who can doubt that Plato wins us to his Wisdom by that skin and body of Poetry in which Sir Philip declares his philosophy is clothed? Not the sententious oracle of one wise man, but evolved dramatically by many like ourselves. The scene opens in Old Athens, which his genius continues for us for ever new; the morning dawns; a breeze from the Ægæan flutters upon our foreheads; the rising sun tips the friezes of the Parthenon, and gradually slants upon the house in whose yet twilight courts gather a company of white-vested, whispering guests, "expecting till that fountain of wisdom," Protagoras, should arise!

Carlyle notices, as one of Goethe's chief gifts, "his emblematic intellect, his never-failing tendency to transform into *shape*,| into *life*, the feeling that may dwell in (xv) him. Every thing has *form*, has visual existence; the poet's imagination *bodies forth* the forms of things unseen, and his pen turns them into shape." The same is, I believe, remarkable, probably *too* remarkable, in Richter: and is especially characteristic of Carlyle himself, who to a figurative genius, like Goethe's, adds a passion which Goethe either had not or chose to suppress,

## PREFACE.

which brands the truth double-deep. And who can doubt that Bacon, could it possibly have been his own, would have clothed Bentham's bare argument with cloth of gold?

He says again, "Reasons plainly delivered, and always after one manner, especially with fine and fastidious minds, enter heavily and dully; whereas, if they be varied, and have more life and vigour put into them by these forms and imaginations, they carry a stronger apprehension, and many times win the mind to a resolution." Which, if it be true in any matter, most of all surely in morals, for the most part so old, so trite, and, in this naughty world, so dull. Are not *all* minds grown "fine and fastidious" in these matters, apt to close against any but the most musical voice?

Which also (to join the snake's head and tail of this rambling overgrown Preface) may account, rightly or wrongly, for my rejection of those essayists aforesaid, (who crippled their native genius by a style which has left them "more of the ballast than the sail,") and my adoption of earlier and later writers. Not, as I said (xvi) before, in copious draughts of their eloquence—|and what pages of Bacon and Browne it is far easier to bear than forbear!—but where the writer has gone to the heart of a matter, the centre of the circle, hit the nail on the head and driven it home—Proverb-wise, in fact. For in proportion as any writer tells the truth, and tells it figuratively or poetically, and yet so as to lie in a nutshell, he cuts up sooner or later into proverbs shorter or longer, and gradually gets down into general circulation.



## PREFACE.

Some extracts are from note-books, where the author's name was forgot; some from the conversation of friends that must alike remain anonymous; and some that glance but lightly at the truth are not without purpose inserted to relieve a book of dogmatic morals. “Durum et durum non faciunt murum.”

And now Mountain opens and discovers—





POLONIUS:  
A COLLECTION OF  
WISE SAWS AND MODERN INSTANCES.

---

Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I WILL BE BRIEF.



## POLONIUS.

(II)

### QUICKNESS OF WIT.

I MAKE no more estimation of repeating a great number of names or words upon once hearing, or the pouring forth of a number of verses or rhymes extempore, *or the making of a satirical simile of every thing, or the turning of every thing to a jest, or the falsifying or contradicting of every thing by cavil*, or the like, (whereof in the faculties of the mind there is great copia, and such as by device and practice may be brought to an extreme degree of wonder,) than I do of the tricks of tumblers, funambules, baladines—the one being the same in the mind that the other is in the body; matters of strangeness without worthiness.

*Bacon.*

“Quickness is among the least of the mind’s properties, and belongs to her in almost her lowest state; nay, it doth not abandon her when she is driven from her home, when she is wandering and insane. The mad often retain it; the liar has it; the cheat has it; we find it on the race-course and at the card-table: education does not give it; and reflection takes away from it.”

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“WHEN THE CUP IS FULLEST LOOK THOU BEAR HER FAIREST.” (III)

POWER to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring. For good thoughts, though God accept them,

## POLONIUS.

yet towards men they are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act; and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground.

*Bacon.*

We are all here fellow-servants, and we know not how our Grand Master will brook insolences in his family. How darest thou, that art but a piece of earth that Heaven has blown into, presume thyself into the impudent usurpation of a majesty unshaken?

The top feather of the plume began to give himself airs, and toss his head, and look down contemptuously on his fellows. But one of them said, "Peace! we are all of us but feathers; only he that made us a plume was pleased to set thee the highest."

*Feltham.*

It is a sure sign of greatness whom honour amends.

*Bacon.*

"THE HIGHER THE APE GOES THE MORE HE SHOWS HIS TAIL."

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(IV)

## DE TE FABULA.

AN Ass was wishing in a hard winter for a little warm weather, and a mouthful of fresh grass to knab upon, in exchange for a heartless truss of straw, and a cold lodging. In good time, the warm weather and the fresh grass comes on; but so much toil and business for asses along with it, that this ass grows quickly as weary of the spring as he was of the winter. His next longing is for summer: but what with harvest-work, and other drudg-

## POLONIUS.

eries of that season, he is worse now than he was in the spring: and so he fancies he never shall be well till autumn comes. But then again, what with carrying apples, grapes, fuel, winter provisions, &c., he finds himself more harassed than ever. In fine, when he has trod the circle of the year in a course of restless labour, his last prayer is for winter again, and that he may but take up his rest where he began his complaint.

*L'Estrange's Fables.*

And follows so the ever-rolling year  
With profitable labour to his grave.

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## THE PHILOSOPHER.

(v)

THE name of “*Wise*” seems to me, O Phædrus, a great matter, and to belong to God alone. A man may be more fitly denominated “philosophus,” “*would be wise*,” or some such name.

*Plato.*

The philosopher stations himself in the middle, and must draw down to him all that is higher, and up to him all that is lower: and only in this medium does he merit the title of Wise.

*Goethe.*

Plato's Philosopher pursues the true light, yet returns back to his former fellows who dwell in the dark, watching shadows.

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“EVERY OAK MUST BE AN ACORN.”

When the Balloon was first discovered, some one said to Franklin, “What will ever come of it?” Franklin

## POLONIUS.

pointed to a baby in its cradle, and said, “ And what will ever come of that? ”

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(VI)

### TROUBLES OF LIFE.

I AM very sorry for your distresses; one of which <sup>1</sup> I think is of the number of the τὰ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν, and may be put an end to at any time. For what is money given for but to make a man easy? And if others will be iniquitous, there is nothing to be done but to have recourse to the *redime te captum quàm queas minimo*: a very good maxim, which we learn in our Grammar, and forget in our lives. The other trouble <sup>2</sup> is not so easily set aside; but it has the comfort of necessity, and must be borne whether you will or not, which with wise men is the same thing as choice: for a fool in such a case goes about bellowing, and telling everybody he meets (who do but laugh at him) what a sad calamity has happened to him; but a man of sense says nothing and submits. This is very wise, you will say; but it is very true. *Jeremiah Markland.*

“ WHAT CAN’T BE CURED MUST BE ENDURED.”

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(VII)

### “ PENNY WISE, POUND FOOLISH.”

The saying of a noble and wise counsellor in England is worthy to be remembered, that, with a pretty tale he told, utterly condemned such lingering proceedings. The

<sup>1</sup> *Loss of money.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sickness.*



## POLONIUS.

tale was this:—A poor widow (said he) in the country, doubting her provision of wood would not last all the winter, and yet desiring to roast a joint and a hen one day to welcome her friends, laid on two sticks on the fire; but when that would scarce heat it, she fetched two more; and so still burning them out by two and two, (whereas one fagot laid on at the first would have roasted it,) she spent four or five fagots more than she needed: and yet when all was done, her meat was scorched of one side, and raw of the t'other side; her friends ill content of their fare; and she enforced, ere winter went about, to borrow wood of her poor neighbours, because so many of her own fagots were spent.

*Sir J. Harrington.*

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## VALOUR AND MERCY.

(VIII)

THAT Mercy can dwell only with Valour, is an old sentiment, or proposition, which, in Johnson, again receives confirmation. Few men on record have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature, than old Samuel. He was called the Bear, and did indeed too often look and roar like one, being forced to it in his own defence; yet within that shaggy exterior of his there beat a heart warm as a mother's, soft as a little child's. Nay, generally his very roaring was but the anger of affection; the rage of a bear, if you will; but of a bear bereaved of her whelps. Touch his religion; glance at the Church of England, or the divine right; and he was upon you! These things were his symbols of all that was good and precious

for men: his very ark of the covenant; whoso laid his hand on them tore asunder his heart of hearts. Not out of hatred to the opponent, but of love to the opposed, did Johnson grow cruel, fierce, contradictory: this is an important distinction, never to be forgotten in our censure of his conversational outrages. But observe also with what humanity, what openness of love, he can attach himself to all things—to a blind old woman, to a Doctor Levett, to a Cat Hodge—“His thoughts in the latter  
(ix) part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased friends; he often muttered these or such-like words, ‘Poor man! and then he died!’” How he patiently converts his poor home into a Lazaretto; endures, for long years, the contradiction of the miserable and unreasonable—with him unconnected, save that they had no other to yield them refuge! Generous old man! Worldly possessions he has little, yet of this he gives freely; from his own hard-earned shilling, the half-pence for the poor, that waited his coming out, are not withheld; the poor waited the coming out of one not quite so poor! A Sterne can write sentimentalities on dead asses: Johnson has a rough voice, but he finds the wretched daughter of vice fallen down in the streets, carries her home on his own shoulders, and, like a good Samaritan, gives help to the half-needy, whether worthy or unworthy.

*Carlyle.*

Il n’y a que les personnes qui ont de la fermeté qui puissent avoir une véritable douceur: celles qui paroissent douces n’ont ordinairement que de la foiblesse qui se convertit aisément en aigreur.

*Rochevoucauld.*

## POLONIUS.

“ It is the best metal that bows best,” says Fuller: and “ *the sweet wine that makes the sharpest vinegar,*” says an old proverb.

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## HONESTY

(x)

DOTH not consist in the doing of one, or one thousand, acts never so well, but in the spinning on the delicate thread of life, though not exceeding fine, yet free from breaks and stains.

*Sidney.*

Of great deeds I make no account; but a great life I reverence.—“ *Splendida facinora* ” every sinner may perpetrate.

*Richter.*

What is to be undergone only once we may undergo: what must be comes almost of its own accord. The courage we desire and prize is, not the courage to die decently, but to live manfully.

*Carlyle.*

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## SOWING THE SEED.

(xi)

Σπείρειν τε καρπὸν Χάριτος ἡδίστης Θεῶν.

Two travellers happened to be passing through a town while a great fire was raging.

One of them sat down at the inn, saying, “ It is not my business.” But the other ran into the flames, and saved much goods and some people.

When he came back, his companion asked him, “ And who bid thee risk thy life in others’ business? ”

POLONIUS.

“He,” said the brave man, “who bade me bury seed that it may one day bring forth increase.”

“But if thou thyself hadst been buried in the ruins?”

“Then should I myself have been the seed.” *German.*

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(XII)

“FUN IN THE OLD FIDDLE.”

As Wilhelm,\* contrary to his usual habit, let his eye wander inquisitively over the room, the good old man said to him, “My domestic equipment excites your attention. You see here how long a thing may last; and one should make such observations, now and then, by way of counterbalance to so much in the world that rapidly changes and passes away. This same tea-kettle served my parents, and was a witness of our evening family assemblages; this copper fire-screen still guards me from the fire, which these stout old tongs help me to mend; and so it is with all throughout. I had it in my power to bestow my care and industry on many other things, and I did not occupy myself in the changing these external necessities, a task which consumes so many people’s time and resources. An affectionate attention to what we possess, makes us rich; for thereby we accumulate a treasure of remembrances connected with indifferent things. In us little men such little things are to be reckoned virtue——.”

*Wilhelm Meister.*

And as of family, so of national, monuments—“Ce sont les crampons qui unissent une generation à une autre. Conservez ce qu’ont vu vos Pères.”

*Joubert.*



## POLONIUS.

“ WISH AND WISH ON.”

(XIII)

Such as the chain of causes we call Fate, such is the chain of wishes; one links on to another; and the whole man is bound in the chain of wishing for ever. *Seneca.*

Who has many wishes has generally but little will. Who has energy of will has few diverging wishes. Whose will is bent on one, must renounce the wishes for many things. Who cannot do this is not stamped with the majesty of human nature. The energy of choice, the unison of the various powers for one, is only will—born under the agonies of self-denial and renounced desires.

Calmness of will is a sign of grandeur. The vulgar, far from hiding their will, blab their wishes. A single spark of occasion discharges the child of passion into a thousand crackers of desire. *Lavater.*

Always let oneness of purpose rule over a boy. He wanted perhaps to have, or to do, some certain thing: oblige him then to take, or do it. *Richter.*

“ HUNT MANY HARES AND CATCH NONE.”

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“ THE EYE SEES ONLY WHAT IT HAS IN ITSELF THE (XIV)  
POWER OF SEEING.”

To many this will seem a truism, who would think it a paradox should you tell them they saw another tree than the painter did, looking at the same. No wonder

then if they see something very different from Goethe in this sentence of his.

1. We do not see nature by looking at it. We fancy we see the whole of any object that is before us, because we know no more than what we see. The rest escapes us as a matter of course; and we easily conclude that the idea in our minds and the image in nature are one and the same. But in fact we only see a very small part of nature, and make an imperfect abstraction of the infinite number of particulars which are always to be found in it, as well as we can. Some do this with more or less accuracy than others, according to habit or natural genius. A painter, for instance, who has been working on a face for several days, still finds out something new in it which he did not notice before, and which he endeavours to give in order to make his copy more perfect. A young artist, when he first begins to study from nature, soon makes an end of his sketch, because he sees only a general outline and certain gross distinctions and masses. As he proceeds, a new  
(xv) field opens to him; differences crowd on differences; and as his perceptions grow more refined, he could employ whole days in working upon a single part, without satisfying himself at last.

*Hazlitt.*

2. So says Bacon, "That is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of life neither."

"Directly in the face of most intellectual tea-circles, it may be asserted, that no good book, or good thing of



## POLONIUS.

any sort, shows its best face at first: nay, that the commonest quality in a true work of art, if its excellence have any depth and compass, is that at first sight it occasions a certain disappointment—perhaps even, mingled with its undeniable beauty, a certain feeling of aversion.”

*Carlyle.*

“ Most men are disappointed at first sight of the sea; as also of mountains, which a novice thinks he could soon run up, till his eyes learn to distinguish those aerial gradations which soon make themselves understood by the feet.”

“ The shepherd knows every sheep in his flock: and Pascal tells us, that the more genius a man has, the more he will see of it in other men. Indeed the clear eye will see in every man something of that which common observers are apt to consider the property of a few. If no two sheep—nay, it is said, no two leaves—are alike, how much less any two men! ”

QUANTUM SUMUS SCIMUS.

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## THE SOLECISM OF POWER.

(XVI)

THE difficulties in Princes' business are many and great; but the greatest difficulty is often in their own mind. For it is common with princes, saith Tacitus, to will contradictories; “ sunt plerumque Regum voluntates vehementes, et inter se contrariæ.” For it is the solecism of power to think to command the end, and yet not to endure the mean.

## POLONIUS.

Princes many times make themselves desires, and set their hearts on toys; sometimes upon a building; sometimes upon erecting of an order, &c. This seemeth incredible unto those that know not the principle, that the mind of man is more cheered and refreshed by profiting in small things than by standing at a stay in great.

*Bacon.*

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(XVII)

## FORGIVE AND FORGET.

“WHEN,” said Descartes, “a man injures me, I strive to lift up my soul so high that his offence cannot reach me.”

It is certain, that a man who studieth revenge, keeps his own wounds green, which would otherwise heal and do well.

*Bacon.*

And finally,

Without knowing particulars, I take upon me to assure all persons who think that they have received indignities or injurious treatment, that they may depend upon it as in a manner certain, that the offence is not so great as they imagine.

*Bishop Butler.*

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## INCONSTANCY.

LE sentiment de la fausseté des plaisirs présents, et l'ignorance de la vanité des plaisirs absents, causent l'inconstance.

*Roche foucauld.*

“THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD ALWAYS LOOKS CLEANEST.”

## POLONIUS.

### THE POOR.

(XVIII)

A DECENT provision for the poor is the true test of civilization. Gentlemen of education are pretty much the same in all countries; the condition of the lower orders, the poor especially, is the true mark of national discrimination.

*Johnson.*

“ How often one hears an English gentleman (as good as any gentleman, however) mourning over the loss, as he calls it, of a hundred or two a year in farming his estate—so fine a business for an English gentleman! ‘ It won’t do—it won’t pay—he must give it up,’ &c. Why, what do his fine houses, equipages, gardens, pictures, jewels, dinners, and operas, *pay*? ‘ Oh, but there he has something to show for his money.’ And is a population of honest, healthy, happy English labourers—honest, healthy, and happy, because constantly employed by him, with proper wages, and not so much labour exacted of them as to turn a man into a brute—is not *this* something to show for your money? as good pictures, jewels, equipage, and music, as a man should desire? ”

Not, however, to be bought wholly by money wages—

“ LOVE IS THE TRUE PRICE OF LOVE.”

(XIX)

Cash payment never was, or could be (except for a few years) the union bond of man to man. Cash never yet paid one man fully his deserts to another; nor could it, nor can it, now or henceforth to the end of the world.

*Carlyle.*

## POLONIUS.

On a rock-side in one of Bewick's Vignettes, we see inscribed what should never be erased from any Englishman's heart:

Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,  
A breath may make them, as a breath has made;  
But A BOLD PEASANTRY, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed can never be supplied.

Advice well remembered by Sir Walter Scott's Duke of Buccleugh, "one of those retired and high-spirited men, who will never be known until the world asks what became of the huge oak that grew on the brow of the hill, and sheltered such an extent of ground."

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(xx)

## THE THREE RACES.

MACHIAVELLI divides men into three classes:

1. Those who find truth.
  2. Those who follow what is found.
  3. Those who do neither. And the same distinction is observed in a pack of fox hounds, only that, in their case, the latter class are soundly beaten, and, if incorrigible, *hung*.
- 

## FOUND OUT BY ONE'S SIN.

WHEN the sinner shall rise from his grave, there shall meet him an uglier figure than ever he beheld—deformed—hideous—of a filthy smell, and with a horrid voice; so

## POLONIUS.

that he shall call aloud, "God save me! what art thou?"  
—The shape shall answer, "Why wonderest thou at me?  
I am but THINE OWN WORKS; thou didst ride upon me in  
the other world, and I will ride upon thee for ever here."

*Jellaladin.*

---

"TO-MORROW AND TO-MORROW!"

(XXI)

THE procrastinator is not only indolent and weak, but  
commonly false. Most of the weak are false. *Lavater.*

"What a quantity, not of time only, but of soul, has  
been spent in resolving and re-resolving to get up out of  
bed in a morning."

"*By and by*, is easily said"—and re-said.

Do immediately whatever is to be done. When a regi-  
ment is under march, the rear is often thrown into con-  
fusion because the front do not move steadily and with-  
out interruption. It is the same thing with business: if  
that which is first in hand is not instantly, steadily, and  
regularly despatched, other things accumulate behind,  
till affairs begin to press all at once, and no human brain  
can stand the confusion.

*Sir W. Scott.*

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THE SOURCE OF THE GREAT RIVER.

(XXII)

It has been the plan of Divine Providence, to ground  
what is good and true in religion and morals on the basis  
of our good natural feelings. What we are towards our



earthly friends in the instincts and wishes of our infancy, such we are to become at length towards God and man in the extended field of our duties as accountable beings. To honour our parents is the first step towards honouring God; to love our brethren according to the flesh, the first step to considering all men our brethren. Hence our Lord says we must become as little children if we would be saved; we must become in his church as men, what we were once in the small circle of our youthful homes.

The love of private friends is the only preparatory exercise for the love of others. It is obviously impossible to love all men in any strict and true sense. What is meant by loving all men, is to feel well disposed towards all men, to be ready to assist them, and to act towards those who come in our way as if we loved them. We cannot love those about whom we know nothing, except indeed we view them in Christ, as the objects of his atonement; that is, rather in faith than in love. And love, besides, is a habit, and cannot be attained without actual practice, which on so large a scale is impossible. We see then how absurd it is when writers (as is the manner of some who slight the gospel) talk magnificently about loving the whole human race with a comprehensive affection, of being the friends of mankind, and the like-such vaunting professions. What do they come to? That such men have certain benevolent feelings towards the world,—*feelings*, and nothing more—nothing more than unstable feelings, the mere offspring of an indulged imagination, which exist only when their minds are wrought upon, and



## POLONIUS.

are sure to fail them in the hour of need. This is not to love men, but to talk about love.

The real love of man must depend on practice, and therefore must begin by exercising itself on our friends around us, otherwise it will have no existence. By trying to love our relations and friends; by submitting to their wishes though contrary to our own; by bearing with their infirmities; by overcoming their occasional waywardness with kindness; by dwelling on their excellences, and trying to copy them—thus it is that we form in our hearts that root of charity which, though small at first, may, like (xxiv) the mustard seed, at last even overshadow the earth. The vain talkers about philanthropy, just spoken of, usually show the emptiness of their profession by being morose and cruel in the private relations of life, which they seem to account as subjects beneath their notice. And we know, from the highest of all authority, that one can only learn to love God, whom one has not seen, by loving our brothers whom we do see.

*Newman.*

To a lady, who endeavoured once to vindicate herself from blame for neglecting social attention to worthy neighbours, by saying, “I would go to them if it would do them any good,” Johnson said, “What good do you expect, Madam, to be able to do them? It is showing them respect, and that is doing them good.” *Boswell's Johnson.*

The joys and loves of earth the same in heaven will be;

Only the little brook has widen'd to a sea.

*Trench.*

## POLONIUS.

(XXV)

### THE WEAK ARE FALSE.

“HE SHUTS HIS EYES AND THINKS NONE SEE.”

As the verse noteth,

“Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem est,”

an inquisitive man is a prattler; so, upon the like reason, a credulous man is a deceiver; as we see it in fame, that he that will easily believe rumours, will as easily augment rumours, and add somewhat to them of his own: which Tacitus wisely noteth when he saith, “Fingunt simul creduntque.”

*Bacon.*

Quack and dupe are upper-side, and under, of the self-same substance; convertible personages. Turn up your dupe into the proper fostering element, and he himself can become a quack: there is in him the due prominent insincerity, open voracity to profit, and closed sense to truth; whereof quacks too, in all their kinds, are made.

*Carlyle.*

(XXVI)

### FORMS AND CEREMONIES.

CEREMONY keeps up all things; 't is like a penny glass to a rich spirit, or some excellent water; without it the water would be spilt, the spirit lost.

There were some mathematicians that could with one fetch of their pen make an exact circle, and with the

## POLONIUS.

next touch point out the centre. Is it therefore reasonable to banish all use of compasses? Set forms are a pair of compasses.

*Selden.*

---

## BUILDING.

HE that builds a fair house on an ill seat, committeth himself to prison. Neither is it ill air only that maketh an ill seat; but ill ways, ill markets, and, if you will consult with Momus, ill neighbours.

*Bacon.*

Isaiah says, “ great men build desolate places for themselves; ” which doing, Camden says, was the ruin of good housekeeping in England.

*Fuller.*

BETTER ONE'S HOUSE BE TOO LITTLE ONE DAY THAN TOO BIG ALL  
THE YEAR AFTER.

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## IDLENESS.

(XXVII)

LA paresse, toute languissante qu'elle est, ne laisse pas d'en être souvent la maîtresse; elle usurpe sur tous les desseins et sur toutes les actions de la vie; elle y détruit et y consume insensiblement les passions et les vertus.

*Roche foucauld.*

“AN EMPTY SKULL IS THE DEVIL'S WORKSHOP.”

As of a man, so of a people. “ The unredeemed ugliness is that of a slothful people. Show me a people energetically busy—heaving, struggling, all shoulders at

## POLONIUS.

the wheel; their heart pulsing, every muscle swelling with man's energy and will—I will show you a people of whom great good is already predicable; to whom all manner of good is certain if their energy endure.” *Carlyle.*

When the master puts a spade into his servant's hand,  
He speaks his wish by the action, needing no words to declare it:  
Thy hand, O man, like that spade, is God's signal to thee,  
And thine own heart's thoughts are the interpretation thereof.

*Mesnavi.*

(XXVIII)

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## PHILOSOPHY OF INDIFFERENCE.

HORACE WALPOLE begged of Madame du Deffand not to love or trust him, or any one else; not to run into enthusiasm of any sort for any thing, &c. “ Vos leçons, vos reprimandes,” she replies, “ ont eu plus d'effets que vous n'en espériez; vous m'avez désabusée de bien de chimères; *vous avez été parfaitement secondé par la décrépitude—je ne cherche plus l'amitié,*” &c.

---

## KNOWLEDGE AND HALF-KNOWLEDGE.

KNOWLEDGE is nothing but a representation of truth—for the truth of being and the truth of knowing are one, differing no more than the direct beam and the beam reflected.

*Bacon.*

## POLONIUS.

Qui respiciunt ad pauca facile pronuntiant.

*Bacon, from Aristotle.*

“The quick decision of one who sees half the truth.”

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## SELF-CONTEMPLATION.

(xxix)

FINALLY, we have read in these three thick volumes of letters<sup>1</sup>—till, in the second thick volume, the reading faculty unhappily broke down, and had to skip largely thenceforth, only diving here and there at a venture, with considerable intervals! Such is the melancholy fact. It must be urged in defence that these volumes are of the toughest reading; calculated, as we said, for Germany, rather than for England or us. To be written with such indisputable marks of ability, nay, of genius, of depth and sincerity, they are the heaviest business we perhaps ever met with. They are *subjective* letters: what the metaphysicians call subjective, not *objective*: the grand material of them is endless depicting of moods, sensations, miseries, joys, and lyrical conditions of the writer; no definite picture drawn, or rarely any, of persons, transactions, or events, which the writer stood amidst—a wrong material, as it seems to us. To what end? To what end? we always ask. Not by looking at itself, but by looking at things out of itself, and ascertaining and ruling these, (xxx) shall the mind become known. “One thing above all other,” says Goethe, “I have never *thought* about think-

<sup>1</sup> *Rahel Von Ense's Memoirs.*



## POLONIUS.

ing.” What a thrift of thinking faculty there—almost equal to a fortune in these days—“habe nie das Denken gedacht!” But how much wastefuller still it is to *feel about feeling*! One is wearied of that; the healthy soul avoids that. Thou shalt look outward, not inward. Gazing inward on one’s own self—why, this can drive one mad, like the monks of Athos, if it last too long. Unprofitable writing this subjective sort does seem; at all events, to the present reviewer no reading is so insupportable. Nay, we ask, might not the world be entirely deluged by it, unless prohibited? Every mortal is a microcosm; to himself a *macrocosm*, or universe large as nature; universal nature would barely hold what he could say about himself. Not a dyspeptic tailor on any shopboard of this city but could furnish all England, the year through, with reading about himself, about his emotions, and internal mysteries of woe and sensibility, if England would read him. It is a course which leads no whither; a course which should be avoided.

Carlyle.

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(XXXI)

## DIVES

HAD a great swamp bequeathed him. He drained, and planted, and stocked it with fish-ponds and game preserves, and enclosed it carefully, so that he might have his pleasure there alone.

One day he was showing it to an aged friend, who admired it much, but said it wanted one thing hugely.



POLONIUS.

Dives asked, “What?”

“Know you not,” replied his friend, “that when God Almighty planted Eden, it was for the sake of putting man therein?”

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“IT TAKES A LONG TIME TO FEEL THE WORLD’S  
PULSE.” (xxxii)

SUCH is the complication of human destinies, that the same cruelties which stained the conquest of the two Americas have been renewed under our eyes, in times which we believed characterized by a prodigious progress of civilization, and a general mildness of manners: and yet one man, scarcely in the middle of his career, might have seen the reign of terror in France, the inhuman expedition to St. Domingo, the political reactions and the civil wars of continental Europe and America, the massacres of Chios and Ipsara, the recent acts of atrocity in America, its abominable slave-legislation, &c. In the two epochs regrets have followed public calamities; but in our times, of which I have traced the gloomy remembrance, still more unanimous regrets have been more loudly manifested. Philosophy, without obtaining victory, has started in defence. The modern tendency is, to seek freedom by laws, order by the perfecting of institutions. This is like a new and salutary element of the social order; an element which acts slowly, but which will make the return of sanguinary commotions less frequent and more difficult.

*Humboldt, Ex. Cr.*

## POLONIUS.

(XXXIII)

TASTE,

IF it means anything but a paltry connoisseurship, must mean a general susceptibility to truth and nobleness; a sense to discern, and a heart to love and reverence all beauty, order, goodness, wheresoever or in whatsoever forms and accompaniments they are to be seen. *Carlyle.*

“TASTE IS THE FEMININE OF GENIUS.”

---

## THE NEW CHIVALRY.

Two boys were playing at chess. A knight was broken, so they put a pawn to serve in his stead.

“Ha!” cried the knight to the pawn, “whence come you, Sir Snail-pace?”

But the boy said to him, “Peace! he does the same service as you!” *German.*

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## WEAKNESS AND VIGOUR OF MIND.

(XXXIV) LA foiblesse est le seul défaut qu'on ne sauroit corriger.

*Roche foucauld.*

Difficult as it is to subdue the more violent passions, yet I believe it to be still more difficult to overcome a tendency to sloth, cowardice, and despondency. These evil dispositions cling about a man and weigh him down. They are minute chains binding him on every side to the

## POLONIUS.

earth, so that he cannot even turn himself to make an effort to rise. It would seem as if right principles had yet to be planted in the indolent mind; whereas violent and obstinate tempers had already something of the nature of firmness and zeal in them; or rather, what will become so with care, exercise, and God's blessing. Besides, the events of life have a powerful influence in sobering the ardent or self-confident temper; disappointments, pain, anxiety, advancing years, bring with them some natural wisdom, as a matter of course. On the other hand, these same circumstances do but exercise the defects of the timid and irresolute, who are made more indolent, selfish, and faint-hearted by advancing years, and find a sort of satisfaction of their unworthy caution in their experience of the vicissitudes of life.

*Newman.*

“YOU CAN'T HANG SOFT CHEESE ON A HOOK,”

“NOR DRIVE A NAIL OF WAX.”

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## CONTENT.

(XXXV)

THE fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and he who has so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own disposition, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.

*Johnson.*

CÆLUM NON ANIMUM MUTANT QUI TRANS MARE CURRUNT.

Contentment, says Fuller, consisteth not in heaping more fuel, but in taking away some fire.

## POLONIUS.

### CONVERSATION.

COBBETT used to say that people never should sit talking till they did n't know what to talk about.

HE WAS SCANT O' NEWS WHA TAULD HIS FATHER WAS HANGED.

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### THE RULER.

(XXXVI) WHATEVER the world may think, he who hath not meditated much on God, the human mind, and the summum bonum, may possibly make a thriving earthworm, but will most indubitably make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman.

*Berkeley.*

No man ignorant of history can govern. Neither can the experience of one man's life furnish example and precedents for the events of one man's life. For as it happeneth sometimes that the grandchild, or the descendant, resembleth the ancestor more than the son; so many times occurrences of the present times may sort better with ancient examples than with those of the later or immediate times. And lastly, the wit of one man can no more countervail learning than one man's means can hold way with a common purse.

In the discharge of thy place, set before thee the best examples; for imitation is a globe of precepts: and, after a time, set before thee thine own example; and examine thyself strictly whether thou didst best at first.

*Bacon.*

POLONIUS.

*“ Il foudroieroit donner le fouet à une jeune homme, qui s’amuseroit à choisir le goust du vin et des sauces.” \**

*Montaigne.*

---

SNOB AND GENTLEMAN.

(XXXVII)

THE Fraction asked himself, “ How will this look at Almack’s and before Lord Mahogany? ” The perfect man asked himself, “ How will this look in the Universe, and before the Creator of man? ”

*Carlyle.*

This “ Fraction ” appears to be, in other words, “ A SNOB,” whom Thackeray has defined to be “ one who meanly admires mean things.”

If a man faithfully follows this advice of Sir Thomas Browne, he can never hope to be *a snob*: “ Be thou substantially great in thyself, and greater than thou appearest unto others; and let the world be deceived in thee as it is in the light of heaven.”

It has been said that in all Voltaire’s seventy or eighty volumes there is not one great thought—one, for instance, like that of Sir Thomas’s above.

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“ PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING.”

(XXXVIII)

Oh, friend, I know not which way I must look  
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest  
To think that now our life is only drest

\* [Added in FitzGerald’s writing in the copy mentioned on page 200.]



## POLONIUS.

For show—mere handywork of craftsman, cook,  
Or groom! we must run glittering like a brook  
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us—rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry, and these we adore;  
PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING ARE NO MORE!  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone—our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household laws.

Si ad naturam vives nunquam eris pauper: si ad  
opinionem nunquam dives.

*Epicurus.*

(XXXIX)

## WORDS THE SHADOWS OF DEEDS.

THERE is in Seneca's 114th Epistle a very remarkable passage about the fashion of speech at Rome in his day, which is unconsciously, but quite substantially, thus translated: "No man in this fashionable London of yours," friend Sauerteig would say, "speaks a plain word to me. Every man feels bound to be something more than plain: to be pungent withal, witty, ornamental. His poor fraction of sense has to be perked up into some epigrammatic shape, that it may prick into me; perhaps (this is the commonest) to be topsy-turvied, left standing on its head, that I may remember it the better. Such grinning insincerity is very sad to the soul of man. A fashionable



## POLONIUS.

wit, ‘ach Himmel!’ if you will ask which, he or a death’s head, will be the cheerier company for me, pray send not him.”

Insincere speech, truly, is the prime material of insincere action. Action, as it were, hangs *dissolved* in speech—in thought, whereof speech is the shadow; and precipitates itself therefrom.

Ubicunque videris orationem corruptam placere, ibi mores quoque a recto descivisse non erit dubium. *Seneca.*

---

## KNOWLEDGE—OPINION—IGNORANCE.

(XL)

PERFECT ignorance is quiet—perfect knowledge is quiet—not so the transition from the former to the latter. *Carlyle.*

Les sciences ont deux extrémités qui se touchent; la première est la pure ignorance naturelle où se trouvent tous les hommes en naissant. L’autre extrémité est celle où arrivent les grandes âmes, qui, ayant parcouru tout ce que les hommes peuvent savoir, trouvent qu’ils ne savent rien, et se rencontrent dans cette même ignorance d’où ils étoient partis. Mais c’est une ignorance savante qui se connaît.

When Newton was dying, he said he felt just like a little child who had picked up a few pebbles on the shore, while the great ocean lay undiscovered before him.

## POLONIUS.

Opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.

*Milton.*

---

(XLI)

## PEGASUS IN HARNESS.

MEN of great parts are often unfortunate in the management of public business, because they are apt to go out of the common road by the quickness of their imagination. This I once said to my Lord Bolingbroke, and desired he would observe that the clerks in his office used a sort of ivory knife with a blunt edge to divide a sheet of paper, which never failed to cut it even, only requiring a strong hand. Whereas if they should make use of a pen-knife, the sharpness would make it go often out of the crease, and disfigure the paper.

*Swift.*

A man had a plain strong-bow with which he could shoot far and true. He loved his bow so well that he would needs have it curiously carved by a cunning workman.

It was done; and at the first trial, the bow snapt.

*German.*

---

(XLII)

## TRAVEL.

FOOL, why journeyest thou wearisomely in thy antiquarian fervour to gaze on the stone pyramids of Geeza, or the clay ones of Sacchara? These stand there, as I can tell thee, idle and inert, looking over the desert fool-

POLONIUS.

ishly enough, for the last three thousand years. But canst thou not open thy Hebrew Bible, then, or even Luther's version thereof?

*Carlyle.*

Once it was, "Farewell, Monsieur Traveller; look you lisp, and wear strange suits; disable the benefits of your own country—be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think you have swum in a gondola."

We may now add—"You must swear by Allah, smoke *chibouques*, and spell Pasha differently from every predecessor, or we shall scarce believe you have been in a *hareem*!"

"NEVER WENT OUT ASS, AND CAME HOME HORSE."

Still, "A good traveller," says Shakspeare, "is something at the latter end of a dinner."

If the golden age is passed, it was not genuine. Gold (XLIII) cannot rust nor decay; it comes out of all admixtures, and all decompositions, pure and indestructible. If the golden age will not endure, it had better never arise: for it can produce nothing but elegies on its loss.

*A. W. Schlegel.*

It is the weak only who, at each epoch, believe mankind arrive at the culminant point of their progressive march. They forget that by an intimate concatenation of all truths, knowledge, the field to be run over, becomes more vast the more we advance; bordered as it is by an horizon that continually recedes before us.

*Humboldt.*

MULTI PERTRANSIBUNT, ET AUGEBITUR SCIENTIA.

## POLONIUS.

(XLIV)

FAUST,

Is a man who has quitted the ways of vulgar men without light to guide him a better way. No longer restricted by the sympathies, the common interests, and common persuasions, by which the mass of mortals, each individually ignorant,—nay, it may be, stolid, and altogether blind as to the proper aim of life,—are yet held together, and like stones in the channel of a torrent, by their very multitude and mutual collisions are made to move with some regularity,—he is still but a slave; the slave of impulses which are stronger, not truer or better, and the more unsafe that they are solitary.

*Carlyle.*

So it is with that soul who had built herself a lordly pleasure-house wherein to dwell alone. For three years she throve in it—

—————but on the fourth she fell,  
Like Herod when the shout was in his ears,  
Struck through with pangs of hell.

(XLV)

A spot of dull stagnation, without light  
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,  
Mid downward sloping motions infinite,  
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand,  
Left on the shore, that hears all night  
The plunging seas draw backward from the land  
Their moon-led waters white.

## POLONIUS.

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime.

*Tennyson.*

---

“ NETHER BARREL BETTER HERRING.”

SEE how in the fanning of this wheat, the fullest and greatest grains lie ever the lowest; and the lightest take up the highest place.

*Leighton.*

Voltaire is always found at top—less by strength in swimming, than by lightness in floating.

*Carlyle.*

“ HOW WE APPLES SWIM ! ”

---

## WEIGHT AND WORTH.

(XLVI)

AN old rusty iron chest in a banker's shop, strongly locked, and wonderfully heavy, is full of gold. This is the general opinion; neither can it be disproved, provided the key be lost, and what is in it be wedged so close that it will not, by any motion, discover the metal by clinking.

*Swift.*

Lady H. Stanhope records that Pitt had more faith in a man who jested easily, than in one who spoke and looked grave and weighty; for the first moved by some spring of his own within, but the latter might be only a buckram cover well stuffed with others' wisdom.



## POLONIUS.

Coleridge used to relate how he formed a great notion of the understanding of a solid-looking man, who sat during the dinner silent, and seemingly attentive to his discourse. Till suddenly, some baked potatoes being brought to table, Coleridge's disciple burst out, "Them's the jockeys for me!"

---

(XLVII)

### TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

It is no very good symptom either of nations or individuals, that they deal much in vaticination. Happy men are full of the present, for its bounty suffices them: and wise men also, for its duties engage them. Our grand business undoubtedly is not to *see* what lies dimly at a distance, but to *do* what lies clearly at hand.

Knowest thou YESTERDAY, its aim and reason?  
Workest thou well TO-DAY for worthy things?  
Then calmly wait TO-MORROW's hidden season,  
And fear not thou what hap soe'er it brings.

Courage, brother! Get honest, and times will mend.

*Carlyle.*

---

(XLVIII)

### GUILELESSNESS.

IN spite of all that grovelling minds may say about the necessity of acquaintance with the world and with sin, in order to get on well in life, yet, after all, inexperienced guilelessness carries a man on as safely and more happily. The guileless man has a simple boldness and a princely



## POLONIUS.

heart; he overcomes dangers which others shrink from, merely because they are no dangers to him; and thus he often gains even worldly advantages by his straightforwardness, which the most crafty persons cannot gain. It is true such single-hearted men often get into difficulties, but they usually get out of them as easily; and are almost unconscious both of their danger and their escape.

*Newman.*

The same writer notices also the general peace and serenity such persons enjoy, who suspect nobody and nothing; who live in no fear of their own plots failing, counterplots crossing, and equivocations detecting each other.

“ We may not be able to change our natures from crooked to straight: but in a few minutes or hours we shall be called on to speak or to act—let us determine to do either, for once at least, truly, and honestly, and guilelessly.”

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## ATHEISM.

(XLIX)

DIDEROT'S Atheism comes, if not to much, yet to something; we learn this from it, (and from what it stands connected with, and may represent for us,) that the mechanical system of thought is, in its essence, atheistic; that whosoever will admit no organ of truth but logic, and nothing to exist but what can be argued of, must even content himself with this sad result, as the only solid

## POLONIUS.

one he can arrive at; and so, with the best grace he can, of the æther make a gas, of God a force, of the second world a coffin, of man an aimless nondescript, little better than a kind of vermin. If Diderot, by bringing matters to this parting of the roads, have enabled or helped us to strike into the truer and better road, let him have our thanks for it. As to what remains, be pity our only feeling: was not his creed miserable enough—nay, moreover, did not he bear its miserableness, so to speak, in our stead, so that it need now be no longer borne by any one?

*Carlyle.*

“ANTICHRIST ALSO BEARS OUR CROSS FOR US.”

- (L) “Ludovicus Vives has a story of a clown that killed his ass because it had drunk up the moon, and he thought the world could ill spare that luminary. So he killed his ass ‘ut lunam redderet.’ Poor ass! ‘He has drunk not the moon; but only the reflection of the moon in his own poor water-pail.’”

Tinkler Ducket was convicted of atheism at Cambridge, and brought up to receive sentence of expulsion before eight heads of colleges. An atheist was a rare bird in those days. Bentley, then almost eighty years old, came into the room, (he was one of the caput, I suppose,) and, being almost blind, called out, “Where’s the Atheist?” Ducket was pointed out to him—a little thin man. “What! is that the Atheist?” cries Bentley, “I expected to have seen a man as big as Burrough the beadle!”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *One of the three Esquire Bedells of that day, celebrated as, “Pinguia tergemorum abdomina Bedellorum.”*

## POLONIUS.

### OLD AGE.

(LI)

IT is a man's own fault—it is from want of use—if his mind grows torpid in old age.

*Johnson.*

“A man should keep always *learning* something—always, as Arnold said, keep the stream running—whereas most people let it stagnate about middle life.”

Goethe is a great instance of a mind growing, growing, and putting out fresh leaves up to eighty years of life.

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### GUILE.

“IN looking over my books some years ago, I found the following memorandum: ‘I am this day thirty years old, and till this day I know not that I have met with one person of that age, except in my father's house, who did not use Guile, more or less.’”

*John Wesley.*

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### “ENOUGH IS A FEAST.”

(LII)

A MAN came home from the sea-side, and brought some shells for his little son. The boy was full of wonder and delight: he counted and sorted them over and over again. What a wonderful place must the sea-shore be!

So one day his father took him to the sea-shore. The boy picked up shell after shell, each seeming fairer than the last; threw down one in order to carry another; till

## POLONIUS.

growing vexed with himself and the shells, he threw all away, and when he got home, also threw away those his father had given him before. *German.*

---

## WIT.

DISEUR DE BONS MOTS MAUVAIS CARACTÈRE.

*Pascal.*

PERHAPS he (Schiller) was too honest, too sincere, for the exercise of Wit; too intent on the deeper relation of things to note their more transient collisions. Besides, he dealt in affirmation, and not in negation: in which last, it has been said, the material of Wit chiefly lies. *Carlyle.*

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(LIII)

## A CHAPTER FROM LAVATER.

“FACE TO FACE TRUTH COMES OUT APACE.”

(If you have but an eye to find it by.)

THE more uniform a man's step, voice, manner of conversation, handwriting—the more quiet and uniform his actions and character.

Vociferation and calmness of character seldom meet in the same person.

(So thought Bacon, who desires a counsellor to adopt “a stedfast countenance, not wavering with action as in moving the head or hand too much, which showeth a fan-

## POLONIUS.

tastical light and fickle operation of the spirit; and consequently, like mind, like gesture," &c.)

Who writes an illegible hand is commonly rapid, often impetuous in his judgments.

Who interrupts often is inconstant and insincere.

The side-glance, dismayed when observed, seeks to insnare.

He who has a daring eye tells downright truths, and downright falsehoods.

Softness of smile indicates softness of character. An old proverb says, "A smiling boy is a bad servant."

The horse-laugh indicates brutality.

---

## LEARNING.

(LIV)

It is an assured truth which is contained in the verses,

Scilicet ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes  
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.

It taketh away the wildness, and barbarism, and fierceness of men's minds; but indeed the accent had need be laid upon *fideliter*: for a little superficial learning doth rather work a contrary effect. It taketh away all levity, temerity, and insolency, by copious suggestions of all doubts and difficulties, and acquainting the mind to balance reasons on both sides, and to turn back the first offers and conceits of the mind, and to accept of nothing but what is examined and tried. It taketh away all vain



admiration of anything, which is the root of all weakness; for all things are admired because they are new, or because they are great. For novelty, no man that wadeth in learning or contemplation thoroughly, but will find that printed in his heart—*Nil novi super terram*. Neither can any man marvel at the play of puppets, that goeth behind (LV) the curtain, and adviseth well of the motion. And for magnitude, as Alexander the Great, after he was used to great armies, and the great conquests of the spacious provinces in Asia, when he received letters out of Greece of some fights and services there, which were commonly for a passage, or a fort, or some walled town at most, he said, “ It seemed to him that he was advertised of the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, that the old tales went of; ” so certainly, if a man meditate upon the universal frame of nature, the Earth, with men upon it, (the divineness of souls excepted,) will not serve much other than an ant-hill, where some ants carry corn, and some carry their young, and some go empty, and all to and fro a little heap of dust. It taketh away or mitigateth fear of death, or adverse fortune; which is one of the greatest impediments of virtue, and imperfections of manners. For if a man’s mind be deeply seasoned with the consideration of the mortality and corruptible nature of things, he will easily concur with Epictetus, who went forth one day, and saw a woman weeping for her pitcher of earth that was broken; and went forth the next day, and saw a woman weeping for her son that was dead; and therefore said, “ *Heri vidi fragilem frangi; hodiè vidi mortalem mori.* ”



POLONIUS.

|And therefore did Virgil excellently and profoundly (LVI)  
couple the knowledge of causes and the conquest of all  
fears together as *concomitantia*:

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,  
Quique metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum,  
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.

I will conclude with that which hath *rationem totius*;  
which is that it disposeth the constitution of the mind not  
to be fixed or settled in the defects thereof, but still to be  
capable and susceptible of growth and reformation. For  
the unlearned man knows not what it is to descend into  
himself, or to call himself to account; nor the pleasure  
of that “*suavissima vita, indies sentire se fieri meliorem.*”  
The good parts he hath he will learn to show to the full,  
and use them dexterously, but not much to increase them;  
the faults he hath, he will learn how to hide and colour  
them, but not much to amend them: like an ill mower,  
that mows on still, and never whets his scythe. Whereas  
with the learned man it fares otherwise, that he doth ever  
intermix the correction and amendment of his mind with  
the use and employment thereof. | Nay, further, in gen- (LVII)  
eral and in sum, certain it is that *Veritas* and *Bonitas*  
differ but as the seal and print; for Truth prints Good-  
ness; and they be the clouds of error, which descend in the  
storms of passions and perturbations. *Bacon's Advancement.*

He a scholar! No, a Witling can't be a scholar.  
Knowledge is a great calmer of people's minds. *Wilson.*

## POLONIUS.

### MIMICRY.

“TELL me of any animal I cannot imitate,” said the Ape.

“And tell me,” answered the Fox, “of any animal that will imitate you.”

*German.*

(LVIII)

### WILL AND REASON.

“NONE SO BLIND AS THOSE THAT WON’T SEE.”

BAXTER was credulous and incredulous for precisely the same reason. Possessing by habit a mastery over his thoughts such as few men ever acquired, a single effort of the will was sufficient to exclude from his view whatever he judged hostile to his immediate purpose. Every prejudice was at once banished, when any debatable point was to be scrutinized, and with equal facility every reasonable doubt was exiled when his only object was to enforce or to illustrate a doctrine of the truth of which he was assured.

*Edinburgh Review.*

So says Pascal, who was a good instance of his own theory. “La volonté est un des principaux organes de la croyance: non qu’elle forme la croyance; mais par ce que les choses paroissent vraies ou fausses, selon la face par où on les regarde. La volonté, qui se plaist à l’une plus qu’à l’autre, détourne l’esprit de considérer les qualités de celle qu’elle n’aime pas; et ainsi l’esprit marchant d’une pièce avec la volonté, s’arrête à regarder la face qu’elle

## POLONIUS.

aime; et jugeant|par ce qu'il y voit, règle insensiblement (LIX)  
sa croyance suivant l'inclination de la volonté."

"Happy," continues the *Edinburgh Review*, "happy they, who, like Baxter, have so disciplined their affections as to disarm their temporary usurpation of all its more dangerous tendencies."

HE THAT'S CONVINCED AGAINST HIS WILL,  
IS OF THE SAME OPINION STILL.

---

## POVERTY.

"THE GOAT MUST BROWSE WHERE SHE IS TIED."

"POVERTY, we may say, surrounds a man with ready-made barriers, which, if they do mournfully gall and hamper, do at least prescribe for him, and force on him, a sort of course and goal; a safe and beaten, though a circuitous course. A great part of his guidance is secure against fatal error, is withdrawn from his control. The rich, again, has his whole life to guide, without goal or barrier, save of his own choosing; and tempted, as we have seen, is too likely to guide it ill.

*Carlyle.*

I cannot but say to Poverty, "Welcome! so thou come not too late in life."

*Richter.*

---

## CONVERSATION AND TALK.

(LX)

To make a good Converser, good taste, extensive information, and accomplishments are the chief requisites:

## POLONIUS.

to which may be added an easy and elegant delivery, and a well-toned voice. I think the higher order of genius is not favourable to this talent.

*Sir W. Scott.*

It is a common remark, that men talk most who think least; just as frogs cease their quacking when a light is brought to the water-side.

*Richter.*

“ THE EMPTY CASK SOUNDS MOST.”

---

## NATIVE AIR.

CHILDREN educated abroad return home to a strange country, not able to mark the places where they found the first bird's nest, the burn where they caught the first trout, or any of those dear associations of childhood, that bind us to our native soil by ties as small and numerous as those by which the Lilliputians bound Gulliver to the earth.

*Mrs. Grant.*

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(LXI) HOMO SUM; HUMANI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

THE sentence which, when first spoken in the Roman theatre, made it ring with applause. 'Trite as it is, we can scarce come upon it now without the whole heart rising to welcome it.

No character, we may affirm, was ever rightly understood till it had been first regarded with a certain feeling, not of toleration only, but of sympathy.

*Carlyle.*

## POLONIUS.

Lavater says, "He who begins with severity in judging of another, commonly ends with falsehood." But what did he *begin* with?

"It is only necessary to grow old," said Goethe, "to become more indulgent. I see no fault committed that I have not myself inclined to."

---

## POETRY.

(LXII)

"MILTON is very fine, I dare say," said the mathematician, "but what does he prove?" What, indeed, does Poetry prove?

"It doth raise and erect the mind," says Bacon, "by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind, whereas Reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things."

But Sir Philip Sidney says, the poet shows the "nature of things" as much as the reasoner, though he may not "buckle and bow the mind" to it: "He doth not only show the way, but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste you may long to pass further."

"Some have thought the proper object of Poetry was, to *please*; others that it was, to *instruct*. Perhaps we are well instructed if we are *well* pleased."

"POETRY ENRICHES THE BLOOD OF THE WORLD."



## POLONIUS.

(LXIII)

### VAIN-GLORY.

THEY that are glorious must needs be factious; for all bravery stands upon comparisons. They must needs be violent to make good their own vaunts; neither can they be secret, and therefore effectual; but according to the French proverb,

BEAUCOUP DE BRUIT

PEU DE FRUIT.

*Bacon.*

Bacon may be talking of the vain-glory of an Alcibiades, troublesome to states; but so it is through all societies of men, from parliaments to tea-tables; for “Vanity is of a divisive, not of an uniting, nature.”

---

### THE GUILTY MAN

MAY escape, but he cannot rest sure of doing so. *Epicurus.*

“RIVEN BREEKS SIT STILL.”

(LXIV)

### LIBERTY. WHAT IS IT?

“HE IS WISE WHO FOLLOWS THE WISE.”

LIBERTY? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out, the right path, and to walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for: and then by permission, persuasion, or even compulsion, to set



## POLONIUS.

about doing of the same! That is his true blessedness, honour, liberty, and maximum of well-being: if liberty be not that, I, for one, have small care about liberty. You do not allow a palpable madman to leap over precipices: you violate his liberty, you that are wise; and keep him in strait-waistcoats away from the precipices! Every stupid, every cowardly and foolish man is but a less palpable madman: his true liberty were that a wise man, that any man, and every wiser man, could, by brass collars, or in whatever sharper or milder way, lay hold of him when he was going wrong, and order and compel him to go a little righter. Oh, if thou really art my Senior, Seigneur,|my (LXV) elder, presbyter, or priest—if thou art in very deed my *wiser*—may a beneficent instinct lead and impel thee to conquer me, to command me! If thou do know better than I what is good and right, I conjure thee in the name of God, force me to do it; were it by never such brass collars, whips, and handcuffs, leave me not to walk over precipices! That I have been called by all the newspapers a “free-man” will avail me little if my pilgrimage have ended in death and wreck. Oh that the newspapers had called me coward, slave, fool, or what it pleased their sweet voices to name me, and I had attained not death, but life!—Liberty requires new definitions.

*Carlyle's Past and Present.*

Plato taught the haughty Athenians they could only be free by liberating themselves from their own passions; and so Milton sings at the end of *Comus*. A later poet, however, says:

POLONIUS.

“Thou canst not choose but serve; man’s lot is servitude:  
But thou hast thus much choice—a bad lord, or a good.”  
“There is a service that is perfect freedom.”

---

(LXVI)

SOCRATIS PATERNOSTER.

WHEN Socrates and Phædrus have discoursed away the noon-day heat under that plane tree by the Ilissus, they rise to depart toward the city. But Socrates (pointing perhaps to some images of Pan and other sylvan deities) says it is not decent to leave their haunts without praying to them. And he prays:—

O auspicious Pan, and ye other deities of this place,—grant to me to become beautiful *inwardly*, and that all my outward goods may prosper my inner soul. Grant that I may esteem wisdom the only riches, and that I may have so much gold as temperance can handsomely carry.

Have we yet aught else to pray for, Phædrus? For myself I seem to have prayed enough.

*Phædrus.* Pray as much for me also; for friends have all in common.

*Socrates.* Even so be it. Let us depart.

---

(LXVII)

GIVING AND ASKING.

I LIKE him who can ask boldly without impudence; he has faith in humanity; he has faith in himself. No one who is not accustomed to give grandly can ask boldly.

He who goes round about in his demands, commonly wants more than he wishes to appear to want.

## POLONIUS.

He who accepts crawlingly, will give superciliously.

The manner of giving shows the character of the giver more than the gift itself. There is a princely manner of giving, and of accepting.

*Lavater.*

THE WISE MOTHER SAYS NOT, "WILL YOU?" BUT GIVES.

BIS DAT QUI CITO DAT.

Silver from the living  
Is gold in the giving:  
Gold from the dying  
Is but silver a flying:  
Gold and silver from the dead  
Turn too often into lead.

*Fuller.*

---

## LIFE.

(LXVIII)

WE deliberate, says Seneca, about the parcels of Life, but not about Life itself; and so arrive all unawares at its different epochs, and have the trouble of beginning all again. And so, finally, it is that we do not walk as men confidently toward death, but let death come suddenly upon us.

---

VENT AU VISAGE

FAIT UN HOMME SAGE.

WHEN Hercules was taken up to the consistory of the Gods, he went up to Juno first of all, and saluted her.

"How," said Jupiter, "do you first seek your worst enemy to do her courtesy?"

## POLONIUS.

“ Yea,” said Hercules, “ her malice it was made me do such deeds as have lifted me to Heaven.”

*German.*

(LXIX)

## PRECEDENCY.

### 1.

A QUESTION of precedence arose among the beasts. “ Let Man be the judge,” said the Horse, “ he is not a party concerned.” “ But has he sense enough,” said the Mole, “ to distinguish and appreciate our more hidden excellencies? ”

“ Ay—can you vouch for that? ” said the Ass. But the Horse said to them, “ He who distrusts his own cause is most suspicious of his judge.”

### 2.

Man was sent for. “ By what scale, O Man, wilt thou measure us? ” said the Lion. “ By the measure of your usefulness to me,” said Man.

“ Nay then,” replied the Lion, “ at that rate the Ass is worthier than I. You must leave us to decide it among ourselves.”

### 3.

“ There,” cried Mole and Ass, “ you see, Horse, the Lion thinks with us! ”

### 4.

But the Lion said, “ What, after all, is all the dispute about? What is it to me whether I am considered first or last? Enough—I know myself.” And he strode away into the forest.

*German.*

## POLONIUS.

### IMAGINARY EVILS.

(LXX)

I AM more afraid of my friends making themselves uncomfortable who have only imaginary evils to indulge, than I am for the peace of those who, battling magnanimously with real inconvenience and danger, find a remedy in the very force of the exertions to which their lot compels them.

*W. Scott.*

A gentleman of large fortune, while we were seriously conversing, ordered a servant to throw some coals on the fire. A puff of smoke came out. He threw himself back in his chair, and cried out, "O Mr. Wesley, these are the crosses I meet with every day!"

Surely these crosses would not have fretted him so much if he had had only fifty pounds a year instead of five thousand.

*John Wesley.*

"On n'est point malheureux," wrote Horace Walpole to Madame Du Deffand, "quand on a loisir de s'en-nuyer."

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### ACTION AND ASPIRATION.

(LXXI)

"NEVER SIGH, BUT SEND."

Nihil lacrimâ citius arescit.

*Cicero.*

THE danger of a polite and elegant education is, that it separates feeling and acting; it teaches us to think, speak, and be affected aright, without forcing us to *do* what is right.



I will take an illustration of this from the effect produced on the mind by reading what is commonly called a Romance or Novel. Such works contain many good sentiments; characters too are introduced, virtuous, noble, patient under sufferings, and triumphing at last over misfortune. The great truths of religion are upheld, we will suppose, and enforced; and our affections excited and interested in what is good and true. But it is all a fiction; it does not exist out of a book, which contains the beginning and end of it. *We have nothing to do*; we read, are affected, softened, or roused; and that is all; we cool again: nothing comes of it.

(LXXII) Now observe the effect of all this. God has made us feel in order that we may go on to act in consequence of feeling. If, then, we allow our feelings to be excited without acting upon them, we do mischief to the moral system within us; just as we might spoil a watch, or other piece of mechanism, by playing with the wheels of it; we weaken the springs, and they cease to act truly.

Accordingly, when we have got into the habit of amusing ourselves with these works of fiction, we come at length to feel the excitement without the slightest thought or tendency to act upon it. And since it is very difficult to begin any duty *without* some emotion or other, (that is, on mere principles of dry reasoning,) a grave question arises, how, after destroying the connexion between feeling and acting, how shall we get ourselves to act when circumstances make it our duty to do so? For instance, we will say we have read again and again of the



## POLONIUS.

heroism of facing danger, and we have glowed with the thought of its nobleness. We have felt how great it is to bear pain, and to submit to indignities, rather than wound our conscience; and all this again and again, when we had no opportunity of carrying our good feelings|into (LXXIII) practice. Now suppose, at length, we actually come to trial, and, let us say, our feelings become roused, as often before, at the thought of boldly resisting temptations to cowardice; shall we therefore do our duty, quitting ourselves like men? rather, we are likely to talk loudly, and then run from the danger.—Why? rather let us ask, why not? what is to keep us from yielding? Because we *feel* aright? Nay, we have again and again felt aright, and thought aright, without accustoming ourselves to act aright; and though there was an original connexion in our minds between feeling and acting, there is none now; the wires within us, as they may be called, are loosened and powerless.

*Newman.*

HELL IS PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS.

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“ ‘AH, thank ’ee, neighbour,’ ” said a perspiring sheep-driver the other day, to one who hooted away his flock from going down a wrong road,—‘ Thank ’ee—a little help is worth a deal o’ pity! ’ ”

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## WAR.

(LXXIV)

WAR begets Poverty — Poverty, Peace —

Peace begets Riches — Fate will not cease —

## POLONIUS.

Riches beget Pride — Pride is War's ground —  
War begets Poverty — and so the world goes round.

*Old Saw.*

How all Europe is but like a set of parishes of the same country; participant of the self-same influences ever since the Crusades, and earlier: and these glorious wars of ours are but like parish brawls, which begin in mutual ignorance, intoxication, and boasting speech; which end in broken windows, damage, waste, and bloody noses; and which one hopes the general good sense is now in the way towards putting down in some measure.

*Carlyle.*

“ Yet here, as elsewhere, not absurdly does ‘ Metaphysic call for aid on Sense.’ The physical science of war may do more to abolish war than all our good and growing sense of its folly, wickedness, and extreme discomfort. For what State would be at the expense of drilling and feeding Dumdrudges to be annihilated by the first discharge of the COMING GUN? ”

(LXXV)

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## LOVE

WITHOUT END HATH NO END.

No wheedler loves.

*Lavater.*

Il y a dans la jalousie plus d'amour propre que d'amour.

Il n'y a point de déguisement qui puisse long temps cacher l'amour où il est, ni le feindre où il n'est pas.

*Rochefoucauld.*

“ LOVE ASKS FAITH, AND FAITH FIRMNESS.”

## POLONIUS.

### OUR TIME

Is like our money: when we change a guinea, the shillings escape as things of small account: when we break a day by idleness in the morning, the rest of the hours lose their importance in our eyes.

*Sir W. Scott.*

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### EXPENSE.

(LXXVI)

COMMONLY it is less dishonourable to abridge petty charges than to stoop to petty gettings. A man ought warily to begin charges, which once begun will continue; but in matters that return not, he may be more magnificent.

*Bacon.*

Fuller says, “Occasional entertainment of men greater than thyself is better than solemn inviting them;” and a proverb bids us beware of taking for servant one who has waited on our betters. In both cases we shall have to spend beyond our means, and be despised to boot.

---

### TRUTH AND JUSTICE

ARE all one: for Truth is but Justice in our knowledge; and Justice is but Truth in our practice.

*Milton.*

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### RICHES.

(LXXVII)

THESE times strike monied worldlings with dismay;  
Ev’n rich men, brave by nature, taint the air  
With words of apprehension and despair;

## POLONIUS.

While tens of thousands looking on the fray,  
Men unto whom sufficient for the day,  
And minds not stinted or untill'd are given,  
Sound healthy children of the God of heaven,  
Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.  
What do we gather hence but firmer faith  
That every gift of nobler origin  
Is breathed upon with Hope's perpetual breath;  
That Virtue, and the faculties within,  
Are vital; and that Riches are akin  
To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death?

*Wordsworth.*

“ Ah! Davy,” said Johnson to Garrick, who was showing off his fine grounds at Twickenham, “ it is these things that make us fear to die.”

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(LXXVIII)

## CHOICE OF A CALLING.

IN all things, to serve from the lowest station upwards is necessary. To restrict yourself to a Trade is best. For the narrow mind, whatever he attempts is still a Trade; for the Higher, an Art; and the highest, in doing one thing, does all; or, to speak less paradoxically, in the one thing which he does rightly, he sees the likeness of all that is done rightly.

*Goethe.*

“ANY ROAD LEADS TO THE END OF THE WORLD.”

Whatever a young man at first applies to, is commonly his delight afterwards.

*Hartley.*

## POLONIUS.

“Whatever a man delights in he will do best: and that he had best do.”

“Themistocles said he could not fiddle, but he could rule a city. If a man can rule a city well, let him; but it is better to play the fiddle well than to rule a city ill.”

---

## ENVY.

(LXXIX)

LA plus véritable marque d'être né avec de grandes qualités, c'est d'être né sans Envie. *Rochefoucauld.*

Genius may coexist with idleness, wildness, folly, and even crime; but not long, believe me, with selfishness, and the indulgence of an envious disposition. Envy is *κάκιστος καὶ δικαιοτάτος θεός*—it dwarfs and withers its worshippers. *Coleridge.*

Therefore when you are next sitting down to your epic or your tragedy, pause, and look within, and if you recognise there any grudge against A, so praised in the Quarterly, or B, so fêted in America, you may, if you please, save yourself a deal of laborious composition.

A fine brazen statue was accidentally reduced by fire into a shapeless mass. This was re-cast by another artist into another statue, quite different from the former, but as beautiful.

“It is well,” said Envy; “but he could not have turned out even this middling piece of work, had not the stuff of the old statue run of itself into shape.” *German.*



## POLONIUS.

(LXXX)

### ART DIPLOMATIC.

THE sure way to make a foolish Ambassador is to bring him up to it. What can an Englishman abroad really want but an honest and bold heart, a love for his country, and the Ten Commandments? Your art diplomatic is stuff—no truly great man would negotiate upon such shallow principles.

*Coleridge.*

Certainly the ablest men that ever were, have had an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of urbanity and veracity.

*Bacon.*

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How often (says the Tatler) I have wished, for the good of the nation, that several good Politicians could take any pleasure in feeding ducks. I look upon an able statesman out of business like a huge whale that will endeavour to overturn the ship unless he has an empty cask to play with.

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(LXXXI)

### SICKNESS.

QUAND on se porte bien, on ne comprend pas comment on pourroit faire si on étoit malade: et quand on l'est, on prend médecine gaiment: le mal y résout. On n'a plus les passions et les désirs des divertissements et des promenades que la santé donnoit, et qui sont incompatibles avec les nécessités de la maladie. La nature donne alors des passions et des désirs conformes à l'état présent. Ce ne



POLONIUS.

sont que les craintes que nous nous donnons nous-mêmes, et non pas la nature, qui nous troublent; parce qu'elles joignent à l'état où nous sommes les passions de l'état où nous ne sommes pas.

*Pascal.*

Sir C. Bell records the general cheerfulness of the sick and dying at hospitals.

GOD TEMPERS THE WIND TO THE SHORN LAMB.

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TEACHING.

(LXXXII)

I HOLD that a man is only fit to teach so long as he is himself learning daily. If the mind once becomes stagnant, it can give no fresh draught to another mind; it is drinking out of a pond instead of from a spring.

A schoolmaster's intercourse is with the young, the strong, and the happy; and he cannot get on with them unless in animal spirits he can sympathize with them, and show that his thoughtfulness is not connected with selfishness and weakness.

*Arnold.*

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You may put poison, if you please, in an earthen pitcher, said Socrates, and the pitcher be washed after, and none the worse. But you can take nothing into the soul that does not indelibly infect it whether for good or for evil.

---

TORY.

(LXXXIII)

TACITUS wrote, (says Luther,) that by the ancient Germans it was held no shame at all to drink and swill

## POLONIUS.

four and twenty hours together. A gentleman of the court asked, "How long ago it was since Tacitus wrote this." He was answered, "Almost 1500 years." Whereupon the gentleman said, "Forasmuch as drunkenness is so ancient a custom, let us not abolish it."

An old ruinous tower which had harboured innumerable jackdaws, sparrows, and bats, was at length repaired. When the masons left it, the jackdaws, sparrows, and bats came back in search of their old dwellings. But these were all filled up. "Of what use now is this great building?" said they, "come let us forsake this useless stone-heap."

*German.*

(LXXXIV)

## HOW TO WRITE A GOOD BOOK.

"HE THAT BURNS MOST SHINES MOST."

A LOVING heart is the beginning of all knowledge. This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its work—that of knowing; and therefrom, by sure consequence, of vividly uttering forth. Other secret for being "graphic" is there none, worth having; but this is an all-sufficient one. See, for example, what a small Boswell can do! Hereby, indeed, is the whole man made a living mirror, wherein the wonders of this ever-wonderful universe are in their true light (which is ever a magical, miraculous one) represented and reflected back on us. It has been said, "the heart sees further than the head." But indeed without the seeing heart,

## POLONIUS.

there is no true seeing for the head so much as possible; all is mere *oversight*, hallucination, and vain superficial phantasmagories, which can permanently profit no one. Here too may we not pause for an instant, and make a practical reflection? Considering the multitude of mortals that handle the pen in these days, and can mostly spell, and write without glaring violations of grammar; the question naturally arises, How is it, then, that no work proceeds from them bearing any stamp of authenticity and permanence, of|worth for more than one day? Ship- (LXXXV)  
loads of fashionable novels, sentimental rhymes, tragedies, farces, diaries of travel, tales by flood and field, are swallowed monthly into the bottomless pool; still does the press boil: innumerable paper-makers, compositors, printers' devils, bookbinders, and hawkers grown hoarse with loud proclaiming, rest not from their labour; and still, in torrents, rushes on the great array of publications, unpausing, to their final home; and still Oblivion, like the grave, cries, Give! give! How is it that of all these countless multitudes, no one can attain to the smallest mark of excellence, or produce aught that shall endure longer than the "snow-flake on the river," or the foam of penny-beer? We answer, because they *are* foam: because there is no reality in them. These three thousand men, women, and children, that make up the army of British authors, do not, if we will consider it, *see* any thing whatever; consequently *have* nothing that they can record and utter, only more or fewer things that they can plausibly pretend to record. The universe, of man and nature, is still quite

shut up from them; the “open secret” still utterly a secret; because no sympathy with man or nature, no love and free simplicity of heart, has yet unfolded the same. Nothing but a pitiful image of their own pitiful self, (LXXXVI) with its vanities, and grudgings, and ravenous|hunger of all kinds, hangs for ever painted in the retina of these unfortunate persons; so that the starry all, with whatsoever it embraces, does but appear as some expanded magic-lantern shadow of that same image, and naturally looks pitiful enough.

It is in vain for these persons to allege that they are naturally without gift, naturally stupid and sightless, and so *can* attain to no knowledge of any thing; therefore, in writing of any thing, must needs write falsehoods of it, there being in it no truth for them. Not so, good friends. The stupidest of you has a certain faculty; were it but that of articulate speech, (say in the Scottish, the Irish, the cockney dialect, or even in “governess-English,”) and of physically discerning what lies under your nose. The stupidest of you would perhaps grudge to be compared in faculty with James Boswell; yet see what he has produced! You do not use your faculty honestly: your heart is shut up—full of greediness, malice, discontent; so your intellectual sense cannot lie open. It is in vain also to urge that James Boswell had opportunities, saw great men and great things, such as you can never hope to look on. What make ye of Parson White of Selborne? He had not only no great men to look on, but not even men, merely sparrows and cockchafers; yet has he left us a



## POLONIUS.

[biography of these, which, under its title, “ Natural His- (LXXXVII)  
tory of Selborne,” still remains valuable to us; which has  
copied a little sentence or two *faithfully* from the inspired  
volume of nature, and so is in itself not without inspira-  
tion. Go ye and do likewise. Sweep away utterly all  
frothiness and falsehood from your heart: struggle un-  
weariedly to acquire, what is possible for every God-  
created man, a free, open, humble soul: *speak not at all in  
any wise till you have something to speak*: care not for  
the reward of your speaking, but simply, and with un-  
divided mind, for the *truth* of your speaking; then be  
placed in what section of space and time soever, do but  
open your eyes and they shall actually *see*, and bring you  
real knowledge, wondrous, worthy of belief; and, instead  
of our Boswell and our White, the world will rejoice in  
a thousand—stationed on their thousand several watch-  
towers, to instruct us, by indubitable documents, of what-  
soever in our so stupendous world comes to light and *is!*

*Carlyle.*

“ And yet,” says he again, “ What of Books? Hast  
thou not already a Bible to write, and publish in print,  
that is eternal; namely,

A LIFE TO LEAD.”

---

DATE AND DABITUR.

(LXXXVIII)

THERE is in Austria (said Luther) a Monastery, which  
was, in former times, very rich, and continued rich so long  
as it gave freely to the poor; but when it gave over

POLONIUS.

that, then it became poor itself, and so remains to this day. Not long since, a poor man knocked at the gate and begged alms for God's sake: the porter said they were themselves too poor to give. "And do you know why?" said the other: "I will tell you. You had formerly in this monastery two Brethren, one named DATE, and the other DABITUR. DATE you thrust out; and DABITUR went away of himself soon after."

(LXXXIX)

Γνωθι Σεαυτόν.

THIS famous "Know thyself," it does but say,  
"Know thine own business," in another way.

*Menander.*

"Hence too," says a testy modern, "the folly of that impossible precept, 'Know thyself,' till it get translated into this more possible one, 'Know what thou canst work at.'"

"It is true," says Harrington, "that men are no fit judges of themselves, because commonly they are partial in their own cause; yet it is as true, that he that will dispose himself to judge indifferently of himself, can do it better than anybody else, because a man can see further into his own mind and heart than any one else can."

"He," says Fuller, "who will not freely and sadly confess that he is *much* a fool, is *all* a fool."

Argenson's friend read a book many times over, and complained of the author's repeating himself a great deal.

Kettle called Pot —

You know what.



## POLONIUS.

### EAGLES NO FLY-CATCHERS.

(xc)

THE slightness we see in Gainsborough's works cannot always be imputed to negligence. However they may appear to superficial observers, painters know very well that a steady attention to the general effect takes up more time, and is much more laborious to the mind, than any mode of high-finishing or smoothness, without such attention.

*Sir J. Reynolds.*

Sir Joshua said, "though Johnson did not write his Discourses, the general principles he laid down in morals and literature served as the ground-work of much propounded in them."

By way of requital, Opie used to relate how a clerical friend of his preached Sir Joshua's Discourses from the pulpit, only changing the terms of art to those of morals.

This might easily be done with the sentence quoted above. The "superficial observers" remain as they are, admiring the laborious finish of the model-man, whose every word is weighed and smile measured—but scandalized at him, who, having laid down a large and noble design of life, is careless of the petty detail of behaviour—whose heart may run wild though it never goes astray.

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### SUPERSTITION.

(xci)

SUPERSTITION is the religion of feeble minds; and they must be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in some trifling

## POLONIUS.

or some enthusiastic shape or other, else you will deprive weak minds of a resource found necessary to the strongest.

*Burke.*

They that are against superstition oftentimes run into it of the wrong side. If I will wear all colours but black, then I am superstitious in not wearing black.

*Selden.*

“The guillotine was as much a superstition as the aristocracy and priestcraft it was set up to exterminate.”

---

## MODESTY.

BEING the case of chastity, it is to be feared that when the case is broken, the jewel is lost.

*Fuller.*

On peut trouver des femmes qui n'ont jamais eu de galanterie: mais il est rare de trouver qui n'en aient jamais eu q'une.

*Rochevoucauld.*

“C'EST LE PREMIER PAS QUI COUTE.”

(XCH)

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## NATURE AND HABIT.

LA vertu d'un homme ne doit pas se mesurer par ses efforts, mais par ce qu'il fait d'ordinaire.

*Pascal.*

All men are better than their ebullitions of evil, but also worse than their ebullitions of good.

*Richter.*

Nature is often hidden—sometimes overcome—seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse maketh nature less impetuous; but custom only doth alter and subdue nature.

*Bacon.*

## POLONIUS.

“ Let him who would know how far he has changed the old Adam, consider his Dreams.”

“ HE THAT COMES OF A HEN MUST SCRAPE.”

---

## EVERY MAN JUDGES FROM HIMSELF.

(XCIII)

WE measure the excellency of other men by some excellency we conceive to be in ourselves. Nash, a poet, poor enough, (as poets used to be,) seeing an alderman with a gold chain upon his great horse, by way of scorn said to one of his companions, “ Do you see yon fellow—how goodly, how big he looks?—why, that fellow cannot make a blank verse.”

Nay, we measure the goodness of God from ourselves: we measure his goodness, his justice, his wisdom, by something we call just, good, wise in ourselves. And in so doing, we judge proportionately to the country fellow in the play; who said, if he were a king, he would live like a lord, and have pease and bacon every day, and a whip that cried Slash.

*Selden.*

So Warburton says, the Bigot reverses the order of creation, and makes God in man's image; choosing the very ugliest pattern to model from—namely, himself.

---

## SELF-LOVE.

(XCIV)

It is the nature of self-lovers as they will set a house on fire and it were but to roast their eggs. Wisdom for

## POLONIUS.

a man's self is in many branches thereof a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall.

*Bacon.*

“Enlighten self-interest,” cries the philosopher, “do but sufficiently enlighten it!”—We ourselves have seen enlightened self-interests ere now; and truly, for the most part, their light was only as that of a horn-lantern; sufficient to guide the bearer himself out of various puddles—but to us and the world of comparatively small advantage. And figure the human species like an endless host seeking its way onwards through undiscovered Time, in black darkness, save that each had his horn-lantern, and the vanguard some few of glass.

*Carlyle.*

IT IS A POOR CENTRE OF A MAN'S ACTIONS —HIMSELF.

*Bacon.*

(xcv)

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## PREJUDICES.

“No wise man can have a contempt for the prejudices of others; and he should stand in a certain awe of his own, as if they were aged instructors. They may in the end prove wiser than he.”

Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice and leave the naked

## POLONIUS.

reason; because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency: it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts. *Burke.*

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## MUSIC.

(XCVI)

“MUCH music marreth men's manners,” saith Galen. Although some men will say that it doth not so, but rather recreateth and maketh quick a man's mind; yet methinks, by reason, it doth as honey doth to a man's stomach, which at first receiveth it well, but afterward it maketh it unfit to abide any strong nourishing meat. And even so in a manner these instruments make a man's wit so soft and smooth, so tender and quaisy, that they be less able to brook strong and rough study. Wits be not sharpened, but rather made blunt, with such soft sweetness, even as good edges be blunted which men whet upon soft chalk-stones. *R. Ascham.*

Plato allowed but of two kinds of music in his republic; the Martial, and the Sedate. He forbade the luxurious, the doleful, the sentimental. And Aristophanes complains of the new intricate divisions that were in his



## POLONIUS.

day superseding the simple plain-song of more heroic times.

One may conceive that Handel is wholesomer for a people than Bellini.

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(xcvii)

## GENIUS.

THE French were distressed that Dumont claimed to have supplied their Mirabeau with materials for his eloquence. “Good people,” said Goethe, “as if their Hercules, or any Hercules, must not be well fed—as if the Colossus must not be made of parts. What is Genius but the faculty of seizing things from right and left—here a bit of marble, there a bit of brass—and breathing life into them?”

“If children,” he says elsewhere, “grew up according to early indications, we should have nothing but Geniuses: but growth is not merely development; the various organic systems that constitute one man, spring from one another, follow each other, change into each other, supplant each other, and even consume each other; so that after a time, scarce a trace is left of many aptitudes and abilities.”

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(xcviii)

## FORMS OF BEHAVIOUR.

To attain to good Forms it almost sufficeth not to despise them: for so shall a man observe them in others—



## POLONIUS.

and let him trust himself with the rest. For if he labour too much to express them he shall lose their grace; which is, to be natural and unaffected.

Some men's behaviour is like a verse wherein every syllable is weighed. How can a man comprehend great matters that breaketh his mind too much to small observation?

The sum of behaviour is—to retain a man's own dignity without intruding upon that of others. *Bacon.*

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## DISPUTES.

“SOME have wondered that disputes about opinions should so often end in personalities: but the fact is, that such disputes *begin* with personalities; for our opinions are a part of ourselves.”

Besides, “after the first contradiction it is ourselves, and not the thing, we maintain.”

---

## WHAT IS A MAN'S RELIGION?

(XCIX)

NOT the church creed which he professes, the articles of faith which he will sign, and in words or deeds otherwise assert; not this wholly; in many cases not this at all. We see men of all kinds of professed creeds attain to almost all degrees of worth or worthlessness under each or any of them. This is not what I call religion, this profession and assertion, which is often only a profession

POLONIUS.

and assertion from the outworks of man, from the mere argumentative region of him, if even so deep as that. But the thing a man does *practically believe*, (and this is often enough without asserting it to himself, much less to others,) the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny there—that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his religion; or, it may be, his mere scepticism and no religion. *Carlyle.*

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(c)

FAITH AND HOPE.

JUST before Socrates drinks the poison, he relates to his friends the famous Mythos of Tartarus and Elysium—the final destination of the soul after death according to its deeds in the life. A Mythos, if not exact in detail, he says, yet true in the main; and while men cannot get at TRUTH itself, they are bound to seize upon the MOST TRUE, and on that, as on a raft, float over the dangerous sea of life.

“ If a man have not Faith, he has surely Hope: and he is bound to act on his highest Hope as on a certainty. Whence does that Hope spring? And he may well embody it in any innocent form of public Faith, which, if not wholly to his mind, is yet a sufficient symbol of what he desires, and at least mixes him up in wholesome communion with his fellow-men.”

## POLONIUS.

When at the last hour, says Richter, all other hopes and fears die within us, and knowledge and confidence vanish away, Religion alone survives and blossoms as the night of death closes round.

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### STUDIES.

(CI)

STUDIES serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshallings of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth: to use them too much for ornament, is affectation: to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, born by observation. Read not to confute and contradict; nor to believe and take for granted; but to weigh and consider.

Reading maketh a full man; conference, a ready man; and writing, an exact man.

*Bacon.*

## POLONIUS.

(CII)

### THE GENTLEMAN'S CALLING.

MEN ought to know that, in the theatre of human life, it is only for God and angels to be Spectators. *Bacon.*

To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God: to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier; more blessed, less accursed!—It is work for a God. *Carlyle.*

“ I lived myself like a Pauper,” said Pestalozzi, “ to try if I could teach Paupers to live like Men.”

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(CIII)

### “ THE ROLLING STONE GATHERS NO MOSS.”

OH unwise mortals, that for ever change and shift, saying, “ Yonder—not here ”—wealth richer than both the Indies lies every where for man, if he will endure. Not his oaks only, and his fruit trees, his very Heart roots itself wherever he will abide; roots itself, draws nourishment from the deep fountains of universal being! Vagrant Sam Slicks, who rove over the earth “ doing strokes of trade ”—what wealth have these? Horse-loads, ship-loads, of white or yellow metal—in very truth, what are these? Slick rests no where—he is homeless! he can build stone or marble houses; but to continue in them is denied him. The wealth of a man is the number of things which he loves and blesses—which he is loved and blessed by.

## POLONIUS.

The herdsman in his clay shealing, where his very cow and dog are friends to him, and not a cataract but carries memories for him, and not a mountain-top but nods old recognition; his life, all-encircled as in blessed mother's arms, is it poorer than Slick's, with ass-loads of yellow metal on his back?

*Carlyle.*

Coalescere otio non potes, nisi desinas circumspicere et errare.

*Seneca.*

---

## FRIENDSHIP.

(CIV)

A PRINCIPAL fruit of Friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swelling of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous to the body; and it is not otherwise in the mind. You may take sarza to open the liver; steel to open the spleen; flour of sulphur for the lungs; castoreum for the brain. But no receipt openeth the heart but a true Friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

*Bacon.*

On ne sauroit conserver long-temps les sentiments qu'on doit avoir pour ses amis et pour ses bienfaiteurs si on se laisse la liberté de parler de leurs défauts.

*Roche-foucauld.*



POLONIUS.

A modern Greek proverb says

“ LOVE YOUR FRIEND WITH HIS FOIBLE.”

And finally, beware of long silence, and long absence.

Πολλὰς δὴ φιλίας ἀπροσηγορία διέλυσε.

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(cv)

“ OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND! ”

AND so, what we never can replace, the mirror of our former selves, is broken!

“ Old friends,” says Selden, “ are best. King James used to call for his old shoes, they were easiest to his feet.”

Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may, by a single blast of coldness, be extinguished: but that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may be for a while suppressed by disgust and resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those who have lived long together, every thing heard, and every thing seen, recalls some pleasure communicated, or some benefit conferred; some petty quarrel, or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week; but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost; but an *old friend* never can be found, and nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost.

Johnson.



## POLONIUS.

### AVARICE.

(CVI)

“ DREAM OF GOLD, AND WAKE HUNGRY.”

WRETCHED are those who in pursuit of gold  
Come to mistake the evil for the good:  
For getting blinds the inward eye of thought.

*From the Greek.*

LUTHER thought that love of money, besides being in other ways unprosperous, foreboded a man's death. “ I hear that the Prince Elector, George, begins to be Covetous, which is a sign of his death very shortly. When I saw Dr. Gode begin to tell his puddings hanging in his chimney, I told him he would not live long, and so it fell out.”

But Misers, unfortunately, live long,—their hard habit of mind not affected perhaps by the wear and tear of other passions and affections; perpetually soothed by the sight of increasing wealth, preserved by the very temperance their avarice prescribes.

Goethe defined Italian industry, “ not to make Riches, but to live free from Care ”—an amiable contrast to much of ours.

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### THE SOUL IS THE MAN.

(CVII)

WE were indeed

πάντα κόνις καὶ πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν,  
if we did not feel that we were so.

*Coleridge.*

## POLONIUS.

Man is but a reed—the feeblest thing in nature. But then he is a reed that *thinks*. It needs no gathering up of the powers of nature to crush him: a vapour, a drop of water, will do it. But if the whole universe should fall upon him and crush him, man would yet be more noble than that which slew him, because he *knows* he is dying; and the universe knows it not. Therefore it is that our whole dignity lies but in this—the faculty of Thinking. By this only do we rise in the scale of being; not by any extension of space and duration.

Let us therefore strive to Think Well.

*Pascal.*

(CVIII)

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## FAME.

PRAISE is the reflection of virtue; but it is as the glass or body which giveth reflection. If it be from the common people, it is commonly false and nought; and rather followeth vain persons than virtuous. For the common people understand not many excellent virtues: the lowest virtues draw praise from them; the middle virtues work in them astonishment or admiration; but of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving at all; but shows, and *species virtutibus similes*, do best with them.

*Bacon.*

Thus indeed is it always, or nearly always, with true Fame. The heavenly luminary rises amid vapours: stargazers enough must scan it with critical telescopes; it makes no blazing; the world can either look at it, or forbear looking at it. Not until after a time and times

## POLONIUS.

does its celestial nature become indubitable. Pleasant, on the other hand, is the blazing of a Tar-barrel: the crowd dance merrily round it with loud huzzaing, universal three times three, and, like Homer's peasants, "bless the useful light." But unhappily it so soon ends in darkness, foul choking smoke, and is kicked into the gutters, a nameless imbroglio of charred staves, pitch cinders, and "vomissement du diable."

*Carlyle.*

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## THE LIGHTING OF THE TORCH.

(CIX)

THE human mind is so much clogged and borne downward by the strong and early impressions of Sense, that it is wonderful how the ancients should have made such a progress, and seen so far into intellectual matters, without some glimmering of a Divine tradition. Whoever considers a parcel of rude savages left to themselves, how they are sunk and swallowed up in sense and prejudice, and how unqualified by their natural force to emerge from this state, will be apt to think that the first spark of philosophy was derived from heaven, and that it was, as a heathen writer expresses it, θεοπαράδοτος φιλοσοφία.

*Berkeley.*

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## THE LOOKING-GLASS.

SHE neglects her heart who studies her glass. He who avoids the glass, aghast at the caricature of morally debased features, feels mighty strife of virtue and vice.

*Lavater.*

## POLONIUS.

(CX)

### SOLOMON'S SEAL.

THE Sultan asked Solomon for a Signet motto, that should hold good for Adversity or Prosperity. Solomon gave him,

“ THIS ALSO SHALL PASS AWAY.”

---

### QUID PRO QUO.

IF the doing of Right depends on the receiving of it; if our fellow-men in this world are not Persons, but mere Things, that for services bestowed will return services—Steam-engines that will manufacture calico if we put in coals and water—then, doubtless, the calico ceasing, our coals and water may also rationally cease. But if, on the other hand, our fellow-man is no Steam-engine, but a Man, united with us and with all men in sacred, mysterious, indissoluble bonds, in an all-embracing love that encircles at once the seraph and the glow-worm, then will our duties to him rest on quite another basis than this very humble one of *Quid pro Quo*.

*Carlyle.*

LOVE IS THE TRUE PRICE OF LOVE.

---

(CXI)

### THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.

ALTHOUGH the misery on earth is great indeed, yet the foundation of it rests, after deduction of the partly bear-

POLONIUS.

able, and partly imaginary, evil of the natural world, entirely and alone on the moral dealings of Man.

*Coleridge, from the German.*

Could the world unite in the practice of that despised train of virtues which the divine ethics of our Saviour hath so inculcated upon us, the furious face of things must disappear; Eden would be yet to be found, and the Angels might look down not with pity but joy upon us.

*Sir T. Browne.*

And how are we to set about passing this greatest REFORM BILL?

To two bad verses which I write

Two good shall be appended:

IF EVERY MAN WOULD MEND A MAN,

THEN ALL MANKIND WERE MENDED.

---

“ HAVE AT IT, AND HAVE IT.”

(CXII)

ONE might add many capital English proverbs of this kind, all so characteristic of the activity and boldness of our forefathers.

The Romans had the same. “ Vetus proverbium est, Gladiatorem in arenâ capere consilium.”

“ Not to resolve, is to resolve,” says Bacon. “ Necessity, and this same ‘ Jacta est Alea,’ hath many times an advantage, because it awaketh the powers of the mind, and strengtheneth endeavour—‘ ceteris pares, necessitate certè superiores.’ ”



## POLONIUS.

It has been said, the English are wise in action, not in thought. It has been also said by the head of a people of thought, that, “Doubt *of any kind* can only be removed by action.”

While we sit still, we are never the wiser; but going into the river, and moving up and down, is the way to discover its depths and shallows.

*Bacon.*

(CXIII) Men, till a matter be done, wonder that it can be done; and as soon as it is done, wonder again that it was no sooner done.

*Bacon.*

When you tell a man at once, and straight forward, the purpose of any object, he fancies there is nothing in it.

*Goethe.*

“I am persuaded, that if the majority of mankind could be made to see the order of the Universe, such as it is,—as they would not remark in it any virtues attached to certain numbers, nor any properties inherent in certain planets, nor fatalities in certain times and revolutions of these; they would not be able to restrain themselves, on the sight of this admirable regularity and beauty, from crying out with astonishment—What! is this all?”

OMNE IGNOTUM PRO MAGNIFICO.

(CXIV)

---

## ANGER

Is certainly a kind of baseness, as it appears well in the weakness of those subjects in whom it reigns—Children, women, old folks, sick folks.

*Bacon.*



## POLONIUS.

While Sir Gareth of Orkney is disguised as a servant, the kitchen-wench calls out—"Oh Jhesu, merveille have I what manner a man ye be, for it may never ben otherwise but that ye be comen of a noble blood, for so foule ne shamefully dyd never woman rule a knyghte as I have done you, and ever curtoisly ye have suffred me; and that cam never but of a gentyl blood."

*K. Digby.*

Ung chevalier, n'en doubtez pas,  
Doigt ferir hault, et parler bas.

A Gallant man is above ill words. An example we have in the old Lord Salisbury, who was a great wise man. Stone had called some Lord about court, "*Fool*;" the Lord complains, and has Stone whipt. Stone cries, "I might have called my Lord of Salisbury '*Fool*' often enough before he would have had me whipt."

*Selden.*

---

"FAST BIND FAST FIND."

(CXV)

DIDEROT has convinced himself, and indeed, as above became plain enough, acts on the conviction, that Marriage, contract it, solemnize it, in what way you will, involves a solecism which reduces the amount of it to simple Zero. It is a suicidal covenant; annuls itself in the very forming. "Thou makest a vow," says he, twice or thrice, as if the argument were a clencher—"Thou makest a vow of Eternal constancy under a rock which is even then crumbling away." True, O Denis: the rock

## POLONIUS.

crumbles away; all things are changing; man changes faster than most of them. Man changes, and will change: the question then arises, Is it wise in him to tumble forth in headlong obedience to this love of change; is it so much as possible for him? Among the dualisms of man's wholly dualistic state, this we might fancy was an observable one; that along with his unceasing tendency to Change, there is no less ineradicable tendency to Persevere. How in this world of perpetual flux shall man secure himself the smallest foundation, except hereby alone; that he take pre-assurance of his fate; that in this and the other high act of his life, his *will*, with all solemnity, abdicate its right to Change; voluntarily become involuntary, and say once for all—Be there no further dubitation on it!

*Carlyle.*

(CXVI)

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## PEDIGREE.

NOBLES and heralds, by your leave,  
Here lie the bones of Matthew Prior;  
He was the son of Adam and Eve —  
Let Nassau or Bourbon go higher.

No Prince, how great soever, begets his Predecessors; and the noblest rivers are not navigable to the Fountain. Even the Parentage of the Nile is yet in obscurity, and 't is a dispute among authors whether Snow be not the head of his pedigree.

*A. Marvell.*

## POLONIUS.

### CURIOSITY.

A MAN that is busy and inquisitive is commonly Envious: for to know much of other men's matters cannot be because all that ado may concern his own estate; therefore it must needs be that he taketh a kind of play-pleasure in looking upon the fortunes of others. Neither can he that mindeth but his own business find much matter for envy; for envy is a gadding passion, and walketh the streets, and doth not keep house. "Non est Curiosus quin idem sit Maleficus."

*Bacon.*

---

### POLEMICS.

(CXVII)

Fallacia alia aliam trudit.

"ONE NAIL DRIVES OUT ANOTHER."

THE Polemic annihilates his opponent; but in doing so annihilates himself too; and both are swept away to make room for something other and better.

*Carlyle.*

Generally, when truth is communicated *polemically*, (that is, not as it exists in its own inner Simplicity, but as it exists in external relations to error,) the temptation is excessive to use those arguments which will tell at the moment upon the crowd of by-standers, in preference to those which will approve themselves ultimately to enlightened disciples. If a man denied himself all specious arguments and all artifices of dialectic subtlety,

## POLONIUS.

he must renounce the hopes of a *present* triumph; for the light of absolute truth, on moral or on spiritual themes, is too dazzling to be sustained by the diseased optics of those habituated to darkness, &c. *Blackwood*, 49.

“Such are the folios of Schoolmen and Theologians. Let us preserve them in our libraries, however, out of reverence for men who fought well in their day with the weapons then in use; and also, as perpetual monuments of what has been thoroughly tried, and found to fail. These folios do very well to block up one of the roads that lead to nothing.”

---

(CXVIII)

## THE TIME OF DAY.

IN the Youth of a state, Arms do flourish; in the middle age of a state, Learning; and then both of them together for a time; *in the declining age of a state, mechanical arts and merchandise.* *Bacon.*

---

## SOLITUDE.

CRATES saw a young man walking alone, and asked him what he was about. “Conversing with myself.” “Take care,” said Crates, “you may have got into very bad company.”

“Eagles may fly alone; but I believe all the wiser animals live in societies and ordered communities.”

“BE NOT SOLITARY. BE NOT IDLE.”

## POLONIUS.

“TOUCH PITCH AND BE DAUBED.”

(CXIX)

NEVER wholly separate in your mind the merits of any political question from the Men who are concerned in it. You will be told, that if a measure is good, what have you to do with the character and views of those who bring it forward? But designing men never separate their plans from their interests, and if you assist them in their schemes, you will find the pretended good in the end thrown aside, or perverted, and the interested object alone compassed; and this perhaps through your means.

*Burke.*

“THE DEVIL CAN QUOTE SCRIPTURE,” &C.

---

“HE IS WISE THAT FOLLOWS THE WISE.”

“WHAT can the incorruptiblest Bobuses elect, if it be not some Bobissimus, should they find such?”

The Gods, when they appeared to men, were commonly unrecognized of them.

*Goethe.*

---

## THE EYE FOR HISTORY.

(CXX)

THE difference between a great mind's and a little mind's use of History is this: the latter would consider, for instance, what Luther did, taught, or sanctioned; the former, what Luther—a Luther—would *now* do, teach, and sanction.

*Coleridge.*



## POLONIUS.

Some persons are shocked at the cruelty of Walton's Angler, as if the most humane could be expected to trouble themselves about fixing a worm on a hook at a time when they burnt men at a stake in conscience and tender heart. We are not to measure the feelings of one age by those of another. Had Walton lived in our day, he would have been the first to cry out against the cruelty of angling. As it was, his flies and baits were only a part of his tackle.

*Hazlitt.*

“ So from the failings of the good to the vices of the bad. ‘ Give the devil his due.’ Henry the Eighth, had he lived now, might be little more than the ‘ First Gentleman in Europe.’ He would but cheat his subjects, (cxxi) (if he could,) and tease his | wives to death without murdering either. He could not have done what he did had not his people, in some measure, approved it; they were as ready to burn heretics, and disembowel traitors, as he; and ready to be burned and disemboweled themselves when their turn came. We are surprised to read of Henry's victims praying for him on the scaffold; but religion and loyalty were one, and men's bodies and souls were stouter.”

---

## LEARNING.

WE have to bear in mind what was said after the revival of letters by men of all creeds, that Learning is the fruit of Piety; in order that, by the sincerity of our hearts, by knowledge of ourselves, and by a conscientious



## POLONIUS.

walk in the sight of God, we may guard ourselves against the desire to appear what we are not; that we may never forgive ourselves the slightest desertion from Truth; and that we may never consider as Truth any result of our investigations that flatters our wishes, so long as there is in our conscience the slightest feeling of its being wrong.

*Niebuhr.*

Each man, who has no gift for producing first-rate (cxxxii) works, should entirely abstain from the pursuit of Art, and seriously guard himself against any deception on that subject. For it must be owned that in all men there is a certain vague desire to imitate whatever is presented to them; and such desires do not prove at all that we possess the force within us necessary for such enterprises. Look at boys, how, whenever any rope-dancers have been visiting the town, they go scrambling up and down, and balancing on all the planks and beams within their reach, till some other charm calls them off to other sports, for which, perhaps, they are as little suited. Hast thou never marked it in the circle of our friends? No sooner does a Dilettante introduce himself to notice, than numbers of them set themselves to learn playing on his instrument. How many wander back and forward on this bootless way! Happy they who soon detect the chasm that lies between their Wishes and their Powers.

*Wilhelm Meister.*

Nothing in prose or verse was ever yet worth a wisp to rub down the writer with, produced in a “fit of sympathetic admiration.”

*Christopher North.*

## POLONIUS.

“ SAY-WELL AND DO-WELL END WITH ONE LETTER :  
SAY-WELL IS GOOD ; BUT DO-WELL IS BETTER.”

Plato, et Aristoteles, et omnis in diversum itura sapientium turba, plus ex Moribus quam ex Verbis Socratis traxit.

*Seneca.*

Preachers say, “ Do as I *say*, not as I *do*.” But if a physician had the same disease on him that I have, and he should bid me do one thing, and he do another, could I believe him?

*Selden.*

---

## FAMILY TIES.

CERTAINLY, Wife and Children are a kind of discipline of humanity ; and single men, though they be many times more Charitable, because their means are less exhausted, on the other side, they are more Cruel and hard-hearted—good to make severe inquisitors, because their tenderness is not so often called upon.

*Bacon.*

---

(CXXIV)

## A PERSIAN LEGEND.

“ A CERTAIN man of Bagdad dreamed one night that in a certain house in a certain street in Cairo he should find a treasure. To Egypt accordingly he set forth, and met in the Desert with one who was on his road from Cairo to Bagdad, having dreamt that in a certain house in a certain street there *he* should find a treasure: and lo,

## POLONIUS.

each of these men had been directed to the other's house to find a treasure that only needed looking for in his own."

---

The error of a lively rake lies in his Passions, which may be reformed; but a dry rogue, who sets up for Judgment, is incorrigible.

*Berkeley.*

Nothing is more unsatisfactory than a mature judgment adopted by an immature mind.

*Goethe.*

---

## ORATORY.

(CXXV)

QUESTION was asked of Demosthenes, what was the chief part of an Orator? He answered, Action. What next? Action. What next again? Action. He said it that knew it best; and had by nature himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an Orator, which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a Player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay, almost as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain. There is in human nature, generally, more of the Fool than of the Wise; and therefore those faculties by which the Foolish part of men's minds is taken, are most potent.

*Bacon.*

Fox used to say, that if a speech *read* very well it was not a good *speech*.

Burke, whose rising emptied the House, is the only

## POLONIUS.

one of the Orators of that day who now can be said to survive. The rest were wise in their generation, and are gone with it.

---

(CXXVI)

“ NEVER SIGH, BUT SEND.”

ONE secret act of self-denial, one sacrifice of inclination to duty, is worth all the mere good thoughts, warm feelings, passionate prayers, in which idle people indulge themselves. It will give us more comfort on our death-bed to reflect on one deed of self-denying mercy, purity, or humility, than to recollect the shedding of many tears, and the recurrence of frequent transports, and much spiritual exultation.

I would have a man disbelieve he can do one jot or tittle more than he has already done; refrain from borrowing aught on the hope of the future, however good a security he seems to be able to show; and never to take his good feelings and wishes in pledge for one single untried deed.

NOTHING BUT PAST ACTS ARE VOUCHERS FOR FUTURE.

*Newman.*

---

(CXXVII)

VANITY—BY A FRENCHMAN.

IL n’y a que ceux qui sont Méprisables qui craignent d’être Méprisés.

Si nous ne Flattions pas nous-mêmes, la Flatterie des autres ne nous pourroit nuire.

## POLONIUS.

Si nous n'avions point d'Orgueil, nous ne nous plaindrions pas de celui des autres.

Les passions les plus violentes nous laissent quelquefois du relâche; mais la Vanité nous agite toujours.

---

## PREJUDICE.

No one has a right to congratulate his neighbour that a deep-rooted Conviction has departed out of his mind, unless a Truth has replaced it. Earnest feelings may have been entwined about it, and may perish with it—how likely that the void in the heart will be supplied with worse vanities than those which have been abandoned.

*Eustace Connay.*

---

## HYPOCRISY.

(CXXVIII)

THERE is no vice, says Rochefoucauld, that is not better than the means we take to conceal it.

A vice, determining outwardly, is nearer to extinction than that which smoulders inwardly.

It is not in human nature to deceive Others, for any long time, without, in a measure, deceiving Ourselves.

*Newman.*

The Mask grows one with the Face, and so we see it in the glass.

The beginning of self-deception is when we begin to find *reasons* for our *propensities*.



## POLONIUS.

The chief stronghold of Hypocrisy is to be always judging one another.

*Milton.*

To those to whom it is of no moment to say, "Do all as if God were looking at thee," Seneca's rule may apply, "Do all as if some Man were looking at thee."

Finally, Xenophon says the easiest way to *seem* good is to *be* good.

---

(CXXIX)

## NO FABLE.

AN ancient Oak being cut down, and split through the midst, out of the very heart of the tree crept a large Toad, and walked away with all the speed he could. Now how long, may we probably imagine, had this creature continued there? It is not unlikely it might have remained in its nest above a hundred years. It is not improbable it was nearly, if not altogether, co-eval with the oak; having been, some way or other, enclosed therein at the time of planting.

This poor animal had organs of sense, yet it had not any sensation. It had eyes, yet no ray of light ever entered its black abode. There was nothing to hear, nothing to taste or smell, for there was no air to circulate, there was no space to move. From the very first instant of its existence, there it was shut up in impenetrable darkness. It was shut up from the sun, moon, and stars, and from the beautiful face of nature; indeed, from the whole visible world, as much as if it had no being.



## POLONIUS.

He who lives “without God in the world,” is, in respect to the Invisible world, as this toad was in respect to the Visible world.

*J. Wesley.*

---

## THE ART OF GOVERNING.

(CXXX)

To learn Obeying is the fundamental art of Governing. How much would any Serene Highness have learned, had he travelled through the world with water jug and empty wallet, sine omni impensâ, and at his victorious return sat down, not to newspaper paragraphs and city illuminations, but at the foot of St. Edmund's shrine, to shackles and bread and water! He that cannot be servant of many, will never be master, true guide, and deliverer, of many; that is the true meaning of mastership. Heavens! had a Duke of Logwood, now rolling sumptuously to his place in the Collective Wisdom, but himself happened to plough daily, at one time with 7*s.* 6*d.* a week, with no out-door relief—what a light, unquenchable by logic, and statistic, and arithmetic, would he have thrown on several things for him.

*Carlyle.*

The hall was the place where the great lord used to eat, (wherefore else were the halls made so large?) where he saw his tenants about him. He never eat in private, except in time of sickness. When once he became a thing cooped up, all his greatness was spoiled. Nay, the

## POLONIUS.

king himself used to eat in the hall, and his lords sat with him—and thus he understood Men.

*Selden.*

“THE FAT SOW KNOWS NOT WHAT THE LEAN ONE THINKS.”

---

(CXXXI)

## MELANCHOLY AND MADNESS.

LET him not be alone or idle, in any kind of melancholy, but still accompanied with such friends and familiars he most affects, neatly drest, washt, and combed, according to his ability, at least in clean linen, spruce, handsome, decent, sweet, and good apparel; for nothing sooner dejects a man than want, squalor, and nastiness, foul or old clothes out of fashion.

*Burton.*

If I could get his beard and hood removed I should reckon it a weighty point; for nothing more exposes us to madness than distinguishing ourselves from others, and nothing more contributes to maintain our common sense than living in the universal way with multitudes of men.

*Goethe.*

BE NOT SOLITARY, BE NOT IDLE.

---

(CXXXII)

## TOSSING THE THOUGHTS.

WHOSOEVER hath his mind fraught with many Thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communication and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they

POLONIUS.

are turned into words: finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's Discourse than by a day's Meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, "that Speech was like cloth of Arras opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in Thoughts they lie but in packs."

Neither is this second fruit of Friendship in opening the understanding restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel, (they indeed are best,) but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a picture or a statue, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother. *Bacon.*

---

PETIT À PETIT

(CXXXIII)

L'OISEAU FAIT SON NID.

Let him take heart who does but, even the least little,  
*advance.* *Plato.*

And I must work through months of toil,  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil  
To grow my own plantation:  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom;  
Content if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.

*A. Tennyson.*

## POLONIUS.

(CXXXIV)

### A HANDFUL OF ARROWS.

EVERY new institution should be but a fuller development of, or addition to, what already exists. *Niebuhr.*

He that changes his party from Humour is not more virtuous than he who changes it for Interest; he loves Himself better than Truth. *Johnson.*

Opposition to Authority is a good reason, not for suppressing a theory, but for delivering it in modest and tolerant language. *Goethe.*

---

“ He who tells *all* he knows, will also tell *more* than he knows.”

Show me a man who loves no one place better than another, and I will show you a man who loves nothing but himself. *Southey.*

The great Art now to be learned is the Art of staying at Home.

Upon the same Man, as upon a vineyard planted on a mount, there grow more kinds of wine than one: on the south side, something little worse than Nectar; on the north, something little better than Vinegar. *Richter.*

(CXXXV) What has Life to show us but the glass-door of Heaven? Through it we see the highest beauty and the highest bliss—but it is not open.<sup>1</sup> *Richter.*

<sup>1</sup> “*Even that vulgar and tavern music, which makes one man Merry and another Mad, strikes in me a deep fit of Devotion, and a profound contemplation of the FIRST COMPOSER; there is something in it of Di-*

## POLONIUS.

The grand basis of Christianity is broad enough for the whole bulk of Mankind to stand on, and join hands, as children of one family.

Lancaster.

Who hunt the World's delight too late their hunting rue,  
When it a Lion proves the hunter to pursue.

Sin not until 't is left will truly sinful seem ;  
A man must be Awake ere he can tell his Dream.

Trench.

---

## ÆSTHETICS.

(CXXXVI)

MEMORABLE—because of the high Office of the speaker, and the Place he spoke in—was the praise addressed by Lord Palmerston to an English Gentleman, who had been visiting Naples, not to explore volcanoes and excavated cities, but to go down into the prisons and declare to all Europe the horrors of Tyranny and misgovernment.

---

Oh would "YOUNG ENGLAND" half the study thrown  
Into Greek annals turn upon our own ;  
Would spell the Actual Present's open book  
Where men may read strange matters—learn that Cook,  
Tailor, and Dancer, are ill Heraldry,  
Compared with LIVING PLAIN AND THINKING HIGH :  
That Fools enough have travell'd up the Rhine ;

*vinity more than the Ear discovers ; it is an Hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the Whole World, and creatures of God ; such a Melody to the Ear, as the whole world, well understood, would afford the Understanding—a sensible fit of that Harmony which Intellectually sounds in the Ears of God."*

Sir T. Browne.



## POLONIUS.

(CXXXVII) Discuss'd Italian Operas, French Wine,  
Gaped at the Pope, call'd Raffaele "*divine*"—  
Yea, could the Nation with one single will  
Renounce the Arts she only bungles still,  
And stick to that which of all nations best  
She knows, and which is well worth all the rest,  
Just Government—by the ancient Three-fold Cord  
Faster secured than by the point of Sword—  
Would we but teach THE PEOPLE, from whom Power  
Grows slowly up into the Sovereign Flower,  
By all just dealing with them, head and heart  
Wisely and religiously to do their part;  
And heart and *hand*, whene'er the hour may come,  
Answer Brute force, that will not yet be dumb.—  
Lest, like some mighty ship that rides the sea,  
Old England, one last refuge of the Free,  
Should, while all Europe Thunders with the waves  
Of war, which shall be Tyrants, Czars, or Slaves,  
Suddenly, with sails set and timbers true,  
Go down, betray'd by a degenerate crew!

---

(CXXXVIII) "SECOND THOUGHTS ARE BEST."

"No," says the Guesser at Truth, "*First* Thoughts are best, being those of Generous Impulse; whereas *Second* Thoughts are those of Selfish Prudence; *best* in worldly wisdom; but, in a higher economy, *worst*."

The proverb, in fact, as so many of its kind are said to do, tells just *half* the truth;—needing its converse to complete the whole.



POLONIUS.

For, if a man be Generous by nature, then it may be as the Guesser at Truth says. But if he be *ungenerous* by nature, then the order is reversed, and the proverb will hold even in that better economy adverted to—his First Thoughts will be those of Selfish Policy; but his Second may be those, not of Generous Impulse indeed, but of a Generous Religion or Philosophy.

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LOT IN LIFE.

(CXXXIX)

“EVERY PATH HAS A PUDDLE.”

WHATSOEVER is under the moon is subject to corruption—alteration; and so long as thou livest upon earth look not for other. Thou shalt not here find peaceable and cheerful days, quiet times; but rather clouds, storms, calumnies—such is our fate. And as those errant planets in their distinct orbs have their several motions, sometimes direct, stationary, retrograde, in apogeo, perigeo, oriental, occidental, combust, feral, free, and (as our astrologers will) have their fortitudes and debilities, by reason of those good and bad irradiations, conferred to each other's site in the heavens, in their terms, houses, cases, detriments, &c.;—so we rise and fall in this world, ebb and flow, in and out, reared and dejected; lead a troublesome life, subject to many accidents and casualties of fortunes, infirmities, as well from ourselves as others.

Yea, but thou thinkest thou art more miserable than the rest; other men are happy in respect of thee; their miseries | are but flea-bitings to thine; thou alone art un- (CXL)

happy, none so bad as thyself. Yet if, as Socrates said, all men in the world should come and bring their grievances together, of body, mind, fortune, sores, ulcers, madness, epilepsies, agues, and all those common calamities of beggary, want, servitude, imprisonment—and lay them on a heap to be equally divided—wouldst thou share alike, and take thy portion, or be as thou art? Without question thou wouldst be as thou art.

Every man knows his own, but not others' defects and miseries; and 't is the nature of all men still to reflect upon themselves, their own misfortunes; not to examine or consider other men's; not to confer themselves with others: to recount their own miseries, but not their good gifts, fortunes, benefits, which they have; to ruminate on their adversity, but not once to think on their prosperity—not what they have, but what they want; to look still on those that go before, but not on those infinite numbers that come after. Whereas many a man would think himself in heaven, a petty prince, if he had but the least part of that fortune which thou so much repinest at, abhorrest, and accountest a most vile and wretched estate. How many thousands want that which thou hast!

(CXLI) How | many myriads of poor slaves, captives, of such as work day and night in coal-pits, tin-mines, with sore toil to maintain a poor living; of such as labour in body and mind, live in extreme anguish and pain; all which thou art freed from! “O fortunatos nimium sua si bona nôrint!” Thou art most happy, if thou couldst be content and acknowledge thy happiness: *rem carendo, non*

POLONIUS.

*fruendo, cognoscimus*; when thou shalt hereafter come to want that which thou now loatest, abhorrest, and art weary of and tired with, when 't is past, thou wilt say thou wert most happy; and after a little miss, wish with all thine heart thou hadst the same content again—mightest lead but such a life—a world for such a life! the remembrance of it is pleasant. Be silent then: rest satisfied—*desine; intuensque in aliorum infortunia solare mentem*; comfort thyself with other men's misfortunes; and as the mouldiwarp in Æsop told the fox, complaining for want of a tail, and the rest of his companions—*Tacete, quando me oculis captum videtis*—"You complain of toys; but I am blind—be quiet"—I say to thee, Be satisfied. It is recorded of the hares, that with a general consent they went to drown themselves, out of a feeling of their misery; but when they saw a company of frogs more | fearful than they were, they began to take (CXLII) courage and comfort again. Confer thine estate with others. *Similes aliorum respice casus, Mitius ista feres*. Be content, and rest satisfied, for thou art well in respect of others: be thankful for that thou hast; that God hath done for thee; he hath not made thee a monster, a beast, a base creature, as he might; but a Man, a Christian—such a man.—Consider aright of it, thou art full well as thou art.

Burton.

FOR EVERY ILL BENEATH THE SUN  
THERE IS SOME REMEDY, OR NONE.  
SHOULD THERE BE ONE, RESOLVE TO FIND IT;  
IF NOT, SUBMIT, AND NEVER MIND IT.



## INDEX.





## INDEX.

Action and Aspiration, 269, 310.  
 Æsthetics, 317.  
 Anger, 300.  
 Art, 307.  
 Atheism, 253, 312.  
 Avarice, 295.

Best in the Barrel, 250.  
 Building, 237.

Calling—Choice of, 274.  
 Chivalry—New, 242.  
 Content, 244, 308.  
 Conversation, &c., 243, 261.  
 Cure or Endure, 222.  
 Curiosity, 303.

Date and Dabatur, 281.  
 Diplomacy, 276.  
 Disputes, 289.  
 Dives, 240.

Eagles no Fly-catchers, 282.  
 Envy, 275.  
 Every-body's Fable, 220.  
 Expense, 273.  
 Eye—what it Sees, 227.

Fame, 296.  
 Forgive and Forget, 230.  
 Forms and Ceremonies, 236.  
     of Behaviour, 288.  
 Found by one's Sin, 232.  
 Friendship, 293.  
 Fun in the Fiddle, 226.

Genius, 288.  
 Gentleman, 245, 292.  
 Giving and Asking, 266.  
 Government—Art of, 313.  
 Guile and Guilelessness, 252, 255.  
 Guilt, 264.

Handful of Arrows, 316.  
 Have at it, have it, 299.  
 History—Eye for, 305.  
 Honesty, 225.  
 Humanity, 262.  
 Hypocrisy, 311.

Idleness, 237.  
 Ignotum Magnificum, 300.  
 Imaginary Evils, 269.  
 Inconstancy, 230.  
 Indifference, 238.

Knowledge, Opinion, Ignorance, 247.  
     and Half-knowledge, 238.

Lavater—Chapter from, 256.  
 Learning, 257, 306.  
 Liberty, 264.  
 Life, 267.  
 Lighting the Torch, 297.  
 Looking-glass, 297.  
 Lot in Life, 319.  
 Love, 272.

Melancholy and Madness, 314.  
 Mercy and Valour, 223.  
 Mimicry, 260.  
 Modesty, 284.  
 Music, 287.

Native Air, 262.  
 Nature and Habit, 284.

Old Age, 255.  
 Oratory, 309.

Pedigree, 302.  
 Pegasus in Harness, 248.  
 Penny Wise, &c., 222.  
 Petit à Petit, 315.  
 Philosopher, 221.  
 Poetry, 263.  
 Polemics, 303.  
 Poor—the, 231.  
 Poverty and Riches, 261, 273.  
 Power and Place, 219, 229, 244, 275.  
 Precedence, 268.  
 Prejudice, 286, 311.

Quid pro Quo, 298.

Religion, 289, 290.  
 River—the Great, 233, 308.  
 Rolling Stone, 292, 301.

## INDEX.

- Satiety, 255.  
Say-Well and Do-Well, 308.  
Second Thoughts, 318.  
Seed-sowing, 225.  
Self-Contemplation, 239.  
    Knowledge, 282.  
    Love, 285.  
    Judging of others, 285.  
    Isolation, 250.  
Sickness, 276.  
Socratis Paternoster, 266.  
Solitude, 304.  
Solomon's Seal, 298.  
Soul is the Man, 295.  
Studies, 291.  
Superstition, 283.  
  
Taste, 242.  
Teaching, 277.  
Three Races, 232, 305.  
Time of Day, 304.  
  
Thought-tossing, 314.  
To-day and To-morrow, 251.  
To-morrow and To-morrow, 233.  
Tory, 277.  
Touch Pitch —, 305.  
Travel, 248.  
Truth and Justice, 273.  
  
Vanity, 264, 310.  
Vent au Visage, 267.  
  
War, 271.  
Weakness and Falsity, 236, 242.  
Weight and Worth, 251.  
Will and Reason, 260.  
Will and Wish, 227.  
Wit, 219, 256.  
Words and Deeds, 246.  
World we live in, 298.  
World's Pulse, 241, 248.  
Writing Well, 278.

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